



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





600021749T







# CAMP LIFE:

OR

PASSAGES FROM THE STORY OF A CONTINGENT.

BY

LASCELLES WRAXALL,

AUTHOR OF "THE ARMIES OF EUROPE," ETC.

"AND EVERY ONE THAT WAS IN DISTRESS, AND EVERY ONE THAT  
WAS IN DEBT, AND EVERY ONE THAT WAS DISCONTENTED, GATHERED  
THEMSELVES UNTO HIM, AND HE BECAME CAPTAIN OVER THEM."



LONDON:

CHARLES J. SKEET,

KING WILLIAM STREET, CHARING CROSS.

—  
MDCCLX.

*(All Rights Reserved)*

250. h. 324.

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY J. WERTHEIMER AND CO.,  
CIRCUS-PLACE, FINANCY-CIRCUS.



**TO**  
**MY WIFE,**  
**IN REMEMBRANCE OF**  
**OUR CRIMEAN ODYSSEY.**





## P R E F A C E.

---

**W**ERE I called upon to explain the origin of this volume, I think I might fairly be permitted to describe it in the memorable words of Topsy, "Specs it grewed."

When I was invited to write a few Crimean sketches for a very popular periodical, I had no idea that they would attain their present expansion. After writing some half dozen papers, however, in a desultory way, it occurred to me that what interested a large circle of readers, and was spoken of favourably by reviewers, might deserve better preservation than the columns of a periodical afforded. Hence, I stopped the series, formed some sort of connecting link between the half dozen sketches that had already appeared; and my additions have, somehow, swelled into a book.

I grant that I am late in the field ; but I know, had I printed my impressions at the proper time, I should not have found half-a-dozen readers ; so thoroughly was the literary world surfeited with war-books. After that evil had cured itself, the all-absorbing Indian rebellion diverted the public mind into fresh channels; and my little book must have been swamped, had it been then produced. I venture it now, because I think there is room for it, and because the tale I have to tell has, I believe, a certain degree of interest attached to it, as being the honest product of personal observation.

I am encouraged in my endeavour by a remark I once read in the *Athenæum*, that every man has within himself the materials for a three-volume novel, if he only draw on his own life's experience. As I only ask room for one tiny volume, surely I can supply enough matter to render my book acceptable to the public.

I feel that I must ask pardon of those of my fellow-officers and soldiers whose names I have mentioned in my text; and they will accord that pardon, I am convinced, because I have been

actuated by a sincere sense of the kindness I received at their hands. I have put down nothing of which either they or myself need feel ashamed; and I entertain a hearty dislike for dashes and capital letters. Nor, have I attempted to write a history of the Contingent, though that would afford scope for much interesting detail. I have merely picked out certain suggestive scenes, and attempted to make my readers understand the sort of life we led. "*Hæc olim meminisse juvabit*" is, at any rate, the only solatium reward I have received for nine months' campaigning.

Equal favor will, I hope, be accorded to my Perote sketches. Though I am well aware, that the subject has been worn threadbare, I think I have stored up some fresh evidences of Turkish life. I give my impressions *quantum valeant* — they may be quite incorrect; but I have done my best to supply an honest account of the Turks, who deserve the study of every thoughtful man in the present aspect of European affairs.

Lastly, I must offer a word of apology for the language I have employed with reference to our

late allies. Regard it, dear reader, as a species of hedging. Though true enough in detail, I should not have aired my opinions, had I been quite sure of our friend over the water. In the present ticklish state of affairs, I offer them as a fair criterion of the existing relations between English and French soldiers. That the shadow of either nation may never grow less, is my most earnest entreaty ; but I fear, though not for ourselves.

L. W.

*Kensington, May, 1860.*

## CONTENTS.

---

### CHAP. I.

HOW I GOT THERE . . . . .	1
---------------------------	---

### CHAP. II.

THE LANDING . . . . .	13
-----------------------	----

### CHAP. III.

PLEASANT QUARTERS . . . . .	23
-----------------------------	----

### CHAP. IV.

THE NIGHT ALARM . . . . .	36
---------------------------	----

### CHAP. V.

ONE NIGHT OF IT . . . . .	45
---------------------------	----

### CHAP. VI.

MY BIMBASHI . . . . .	56
-----------------------	----

*b*

## CHAP. VII.

BONO JOHNNY . . . . .	67
-----------------------	----

## CHAP. VIII.

THE "STAR-SPANGLED BANNER." . . . .	78
-------------------------------------	----

## CHAP. IX.

THE MARKET-PLACE, KERTCH . . . . .	86
------------------------------------	----

## CHAP. X.

A RUSSIAN BEAR . . . . .	97
--------------------------	----

## CHAP. XI.

THE WOMAN IN GREY . . . . .	108
-----------------------------	-----

## CHAP. XII.

OUR ALLIES . . . . .	121
----------------------	-----

## CHAP. XIII.

A FRENCH JOHN BULL . . . . .	132
------------------------------	-----

## CHAP. XIV.

WHO KILLED THE CAT? . . . . .	142
-------------------------------	-----

## CHAP. XV.

CAPTAIN MARTINITZ . . . . .	153
-----------------------------	-----

## CHAP. XVI.

LIFE IN THE HOSPITALS . . . . .	164
---------------------------------	-----

CONTENTS.

xi

CHAP. XVII.

OUR RACES—THE RAMADAN . . .	174
-----------------------------	-----

CHAP. XVIII.

THE LAND TRANSPORT . . .	185
--------------------------	-----

CHAP. XIX.

A PIC-NIC PARTY . . .	196
-----------------------	-----

CHAP. XX.

THE EMBARKATION . . .	207
-----------------------	-----

CHAP. XXI.

DOWN THE BLACK SEA . . .	218
--------------------------	-----

CHAP. XXII.

A PEROTE HOTEL . . .	229
----------------------	-----

CHAP. XXIII.

HERE AND THERE IN PERA . . .	243
------------------------------	-----

CHAP. XXIV.

A NIGHT WITH THE SULTAN . . .	24
-------------------------------	----

CHAP. XXV.

THE SWEET WATERS . . .	266
------------------------	-----



## CHAP. XXVI.

A DAY IN STAMBOUL . . . .	277
---------------------------	-----

## CHAP. XXVII.

UP THE DANUBE . . . . .	288
-------------------------	-----

## CHAP. XXVIII.

CIVILIZATION . . . . .	298
------------------------	-----

# CAMP LIFE.



## CHAPTER I.

### HOW I GOT THERE.

SOME gentlemen of a philosophic turn of mind, have ventured on the broad assertion, that everybody is more or less mad; and that those may consider themselves fortunate who escape the asylum, to which they by good right are due. I will not go so far as to endorse this verdict generally; but I am quite ready to admit, that my special mania revealed its presence, when I accepted an engagement in the Turkish contingent.

My motive for doing so, I have never yet been able to fathom. I gave up a comfortable income, larger than the one I was about to receive, and I am convinced that it was not patriotism that moved me; for I have lived so long abroad,

that I am a perfect Cosmopolitan, and during the whole Crimean war, could never pump up that intense hatred of the Russians, which was becoming a *civis Britannicus*. I am afraid it was the sight of the smart artillery uniform that kicked the beam: the gold lace on the sleeve "Up to here, sir," (to quote from the memorable gentleman who lived in Tattiboy's rents) and the gay red collar overpowered me. I would be a soldier. Perhaps, though, there was mingled with this, a lurking desire "strange countries for to see," like that which drew Lord Lovel from the soft embraces of Miss Nancy Bell, leading to her premature decease. No matter, I became a defender of my country. But that expression is wrong; I should say, a defender of the Paynim; for had not England generously drawn her mighty glaive to secure the independence of Mahound? Six years later, and the same generous nation allows the sacrifice of Savoy to be consummated with an impotent protest! How different matters look, when your opponent is only thirty instead of three thousand miles off! There is nothing beyond consistency, after all!

I need not stay to describe all the details of my equipment. I may merely remark, that I dis-

posed of all my belongings at absurd prices, and laid out the proceeds in buying at a very dear rate every conceivable impediment, which I was assured by the outfitters was indispensable for the field. The greatest abomination of all was the patent canteen, containing every possible article for the *cuisine*, made to fit in each other with marvellous precision. I may as well dispose of this nuisance at once. Within a month, not an article belonging to me could be found; for my lad was too honest, perhaps too stupid, for his post, and allowed the other servants to recoup the results of their carelessness by helping themselves from my canteen. Then the leather zinc-lined case stared at me with bitter sarcasm, as much as to say, "Jolly this, ain't it, old boy?"

Talking of servants, they displayed a wonderful reluctance to risk their carcasses, though the terms offered them—three shillings a day and rations—were not bad. One smart young fellow I engaged, bolted at the last moment, after all his clothes were prepared; and I was compelled to put up with a stable-boy from the Knightsbridge barracks, who wished to see the world at another person's expense. Were I to go to the wars again, I should certainly decline the government allowance for

servants, and not burthen myself with such an incumbrance. As a rule, servants in the Crimea were the best-off class ; they had hardly anything to do, and that little they did so begrudgingly, that you generally did it, yourself. The groom of a live baronet, who went up with us from Stamboul to Kertch, put in a formal protest to his master, because he was not allowed to dine at the cabin table. His salary was quite as large as our pay ; and we were only contingents after all ! I felt quite sorry for the fine young fellow, when he found it his "painful dooty" to resign, because his master remained obdurate.

Imagine, to use a Gallicism, the beautiful gold lace for which I had sold my birthright of liberty, all carefully sewn up in tissue paper, and deposited in the bullock-trunks, together with those articles which no officer could be without. One of these was a patent lamp, with twelve dozen lbs. of lucifer-dipped wicks, "strongly recommended by the authorities." It contained a young saucepan, and a pewter pot, and, according to the patentee's assurances, was far superior to Soyer's magic stove. All I can say in its favour is, that I found the candles very useful for pipe-lights, whenever the lucifer-box ran out.

The result of my outfitting experiences I find to be this: Buy nothing which is strongly recommended by the authorities, for it is sure to prove a delusion and a snare. The best plan is to buy nothing not absolutely necessary; keep a sharp eye on your flannels and blankets, and with these you may defy any weather, especially if you have a fur coat. As for gim-cracks, you are sure to lose them when you most need them, and when their absence renders you uncomfortable. Had you done without superfluities from the beginning, you would not feel their loss so much. Besides, you have thus an opportunity for testing your inventive faculties; and you learn the wondrous uses to which even a marmalade-pot may be turned. For my part, I flung away some fifty pounds in these absurdities, which did not do me service to the amount of fifty pence. The true theory of going to the wars is, to have nothing worth losing, and trusting to Providence to supply your wants. Look at the French in the Italian war; the officers were compelled to go into the field without even a change of garment; they had to dry their clothes all standing, but I have not heard that they were the worse for it. On the other hand, the Austrians, encumbered

with weighty knapsacks, were sure to be defeated by their active assailants. Or, take another instance; would our troops have performed those fabulous marches across India, had they been followed by a baggage-train, emulating Xerxes? A great coat and a forage-cap—such was the simple equipment of the men, whose achievements made Sir Hugh Rose's name ring throughout Europe.

In one thing, I grant, we were fortunate in our Exodus—the “Athol Brose” transport, M'Alpine, master, given up for our special convenience, was a regular floating hotel. The captain and purser were Bricks (I can't help it, it is the only word that will thoroughly convey my meaning), and our table was really lavishly spread. There was no stint of champagne and hock; and we fared sumptuously every day, though our linen might not be remarkably fine.

Looking back, as I do now, I consider the transport system a huge blunder. War is a trade, as much as any other; and officers must go into training for it, and serve an apprenticeship. Instead of being gradually weaned of their luxurious habits and high feeding, the voyage to the Crimea was one lengthened carouse. Every-

thing was at our command ; and the consequence was, that when we were landed on the desolate coast, the contrast was as startling as in jumping from a snug bed into an apparently iced shower-bath.

One national custom we did not shake off with the dust of our fatherland — I mean, the system of testimonializing. I do not say, that the captain did not deserve the seventy guineas we clubbed and presented to him, for he was courtesy itself ; but why make an invidious distinction, when all the officers of the ship were equally attentive ? By the strict rule of logic, it was the purser who deserved the testimonial, for the extras came out of his pocket ; but then he was well paid by the Home Government, and could afford to be liberal.

But though I pass over this instance, I must protest against another insanity. A sergeant, drawing water up in a bucket, was pitched over the side. In about half an hour, a boat was lowered from the davits, and four men jumped in. Had not the sea been perfectly calm, and the sergeant a good swimmer, the delay was long enough to drown a regiment ; as it was, he was picked up quite unhurt, and apparently ready to float for hours.



Naturally, such an opportunity for a testimonial could not be neglected: ten pounds were collected, and the men asked whether they would prefer silver cups or the money? Of course, they would have chosen the latter; equally of course, they selected the former; and so, on our reaching Malta, four silver goblets were bought, appropriate inscriptions engraved upon them, and they were presented to the men with a neat speech. Three days after we reached Kertch, a Jew exposed the cups for sale in the market-place.

There was one characteristic thing connected with the accident. During the height of the confusion, when everybody was offering the most contradictory advice, or shouting the most entangled orders, a sailor walked up to the captain, with sorrow depicted upon his manly brow. "There's another bucket gone, Sir," he said, "all along of them —— [well, I will not set down the expletive, for it isn't pretty] soldiers." His mind was set on the expenditure of ships' stores; and, I fancy, had the choice been given him between saving the sergeant or the bucket, the former would have been nowhere.

Our ship was very heavily laden with ammunition, which brought her down by the head. In

crossing the Bay of Biscay, the sea was somewhat rough; but our men, who messed in the fore-cabin, would not have the hatches put on at night, although warned of the danger they ran. One night, when I was officer on duty, I heard a strange commotion, and fancied the ship must be on fire. I hurried forward with a lanthorn, and went down the companion in the direction of the sound. The scene that awaited me was exquisitely ludicrous: a huge sea had poured over the bows unexpectedly, and hurled several tons of water into the cabin. In the alarm, every man had leaped from his hammock, and stood in about four feet of water. Tables, stools, kits, and all the soldiers' gear, were floating about on the top of the water, and made the confusion worse.

At length I managed to restore some degree of order, and had a quantity of buckets passed along by the watch. I then ordered the men to form a chain, and hand the water up bucket-wise, to be emptied over the side. The poor fellows were in anything but a comfortable position; for the month was November, and it can hardly be pleasant to expose yourself to the winds in the lightest possible attire; but, *que faire?* Luckily, no one caught any dangerous illness from the

exposure, and it afforded matter of amusement for many a day. But from that time my men never went below without drawing the hatch carefully over them. In the stifling heat of the Mediterranean, I should have thought such a *Sturz-bad* preferable.

We had on board a worthy veterinary surgeon, Diggins by name, who was the cream of politeness. I do not think the poor fellow had one entire meal during the whole passage out. Certain arrangements, privately made with the steward, procured the ham being always placed before him, and his vanity made him fall into the trap. Everybody praised his exquisite carving; and I really fancied, for some time, that he had studied at Vauxhall; for no one but an ex-waiter at that establishment could have cut such diaphanous slices of ham. Whenever I gazed at him, I could not but think of the fable of the crow and the fox.

The amusements on board were not extensive, I confess; for they principally consisted in drinking bitter beer, and then tossing to see who should pay for it. As pale ale was the only extra on board, I need not say that astonishing inroads were made on the purser's store. A quiet pipe

on the paddle-box, and a French novel, were my elysium.

\* \* \* \*

“ And so, Captain, that is Fort Paul? Very good.”

The voyage is over, and our troubles are about to commence. Poor young bears! We had more than our ordinary share; and many a time had we reason to regret, that the “Athol Brose” could not be lugged on shore, and converted into our barracks.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE LANDING.

WE had eaten our last dinner for the present of the silver fork school, and were lounging about the deck, waiting Micawber-wise for what was going to turn up. Darkness was drawing in a pace, and we hugged ourselves with the thought that we should at any rate have one more night between us and the unknown. But we were reckoning without our chief.

According to the charts, there was not sufficient depth of water in Kertch harbour for the "Athol Brose" to go in, unless lightened. Nothing more natural, then, than to get rid of all the live lumber first; and the order was at once issued that we should prepare for landing. A deputy acting assistant quarter-master-general had come off, scenting a good dinner; and he had promised to make us all comfortable for the night. Confound him!

The boats were lowered, beds and trunks tumbled into them, and we on the top of these, taking our seats as well as we could, to the great amusement of the sailors, who had an opportunity for quizzing the "sodger" officers. I had the honour of being told off to command the landing party ; and as we had only two boats, it was quite dark before I reached the landing-place, and found myself in Russia.

And such a landing-place ! A jetty running out a few yards into the tideless sea, and full of treacherous holes, yawning for legs to break ; a fine deep crust of mud on the top of the rotting planks, in which your foot sank so deep, that your boot must be left behind in the struggle ; and the whole scene, lit up by a solitary lanthorn, held by a morose-looking quartermaster's sergeant, who was savage at our comfortable appearance ! Here an officer, red in the face from his exertions to drag his bullock-trunk out of the sea, into which it had fallen through an unsuspected hole ; there, a sergeant full length in the mud, in which he left a perfect impression ; and in the midst of the confusion, our servants looking on in the most lordly manner, and more helpless than their masters—were that possible.

At length, the D.A.A.Q.M.G. condescended to make his appearance, and conduct us to the quarters which were to be comfortable. To reach them was a tremendous struggle, for our road ran up the side of a hill, composed of one solid mass of viscous clay. Up these winding paths, our baggage had to be dragged by main force; and had it not been for the ready assistance our sergeants afforded us, it is my private opinion that our traps would still be lying at the bottom of the mud.

At length the wished-for haven is reached: these, then, are our comfortable quarters. Well! if these are comfortable—I should like to see what passes under the name of uncomfortable in this dreary land! It was a newly erected hut, a cross between a barn and a cowhouse, the walls exactly resembling the flooring of the Crystal Palace, and letting in the cold nipping breeze at every chink.

Well! there was no help for it, and it was only for one night. So I ordered the sergeants and servants to lay their blankets in one half of the building, while the officers set to work building up their patent camp-beds. Such a job as that was! All the parts were arranged with such ma-

thematical accuracy, that it was almost impossible to make them fit; and when that task was accomplished, equally difficult to undo them again.

It may be a fancy of mine; but I thought I could read characters in the varieties of the beds. Here was a splendid cast-iron affair, big enough to realise the old jest of being conveyed in two ships, with most comfortable cork mattresses and air pillows. That officer will be a hard bargain, I thought to myself. Then come a row of practical bedsteads, made of wood and sacking, and, when rolled up, representing nothing so much as a Chinese puzzle. The leather covering formed the mattress; and, by the help of some dozen blankets, these beds passed muster.

As for myself, I had, of course, a camp bed of the last new pattern, in which, as I was told, comfort had not been sacrificed to lightness. Let us see how the assertion is verified. Certainly it is easy enough to put up, but it looks rather rickety, doesn't it? Perhaps, too, it might be broader, but no matter, *à la guerre, comme à la guerre*. I recline at full length to try my purchase, and make the far from pleasant discovery that, while my bed is not quite wide enough to take me in all at once, about two feet of my



person project beyond the other end. Double yourself up, I had said; but it was not so easy, for in doing so, my knees projected. All I could do was to lie on my back with my knees up in the air, looking like a mummy swathed in tarpaulin. I did not dare move, once I entered my couch, for, did I so, all the clothes infallibly slipped off. To settle the affair of my bed; I found that it formed a very comfortable chaise-longue by day, but when I wished to sleep, I discovered that it was advisable to lay my blankets on the ground, and roll myself up in them like a hedgehog.

When this operation was effected—not without sundry failings of breath—it struck everybody simultaneously that it was supper-time, and that we were awfully hungry. The men had brought off two days' provisions with them; but, as there were no fireplaces, or chance of lighting a fire, they could only fall back on the rum, which they did to rather too liberal an extent. As for the officers, on clubbing our resources, we found that we possessed thirty-seven bottles of spirits, twenty-four of bitter beer, one Bologna sausage, and two and a half ship's biscuits. It was the intolerable quantity of sack once more repeated.

There was no lack of appliances for water-carriage among us ; every officer had either a very neat wooden barrel hung over his shoulder, or a couple of gutta percha bottles ; but, somehow, no one had thought about filling them. But water we must have ; we wanted a drop of something to comfort us in our dis-illusions. Every man had produced his patent pocket-knife, and engaged on the pale ale bottles with the corkscrew therein to be found—but Water! was the cry. I stepped out into the pitchy darkness and—captured a Turk.

“What a specimen of a soldier,” I said to myself, as I dragged the much-resisting man into the candle-light. He was wrapped from head to foot in a grey sacking, representing a great coat, and with a hood drawn over his face, the tassel standing up like a gigantic nightcap. Still, he was intelligent for a wonder : perhaps the sight of half a crown quickened his faculties. He held out his hand admiringly ; but we declined handing it over till we had received his *quid pro quo*. With a grin, which showed all his glistening teeth, he went off with a couple of sergeants to fetch the water.

c

"Here it is! Now, my boys, up with your cups; I'll pour."

A sudden uplifting of the vessels to the lips, and an equally sudden spitting out of water, with many wry faces.

"That can't be water for Christians to drink! Hallo, Sergeant Moore, where did you get this stuff from? Surely you must have drawn it from the Black Sea? Isn't there a well about?"

"If you please, sir, that's the only water to be had at Fort Paul. There isn't a spring in the place; and that is made by a condensing apparatus down by the sea side."

It was too true; every man stationed at Fort Paul had to drink this mawkish, half-warm beverage, or take to brandy.

I think that this incident put the climax on our misery: we had hitherto borne up manfully; but now all the horrors of our position flashed upon us. We gave in, and were prepared for the worst. We drank our brandy and water moodily, and at huge gulps. It was a perfect instance of drinking to drown one's sorrow. Before long, we sought shelter in our beds, trying in vain to protect our shoulders against the icy blast that crept through the walls of the hut.

What a night it was! The men could not be kept quiet; they were having continued fights; and, once, when I had dropped off into a restless sleep, I was aroused by a cry of "thieves." On inquiry, I found that the man had seen, or fancied he had seen, a couple of Turks peering in at the door-way; so to encourage the others, I immediately put him on as sentry, to which he demurred in vain.

Day was just breaking, as we were disturbed by the trampling of animals outside the door; and the entrance of an officer, who stated that he had directions to convey our luggage to Kertch. How happy we were at the news, I need not say; for to our fancy nothing could be worse than our present position. Our beds were bundled up any how, and carried out with the luggage. Outside, we found some two hundred mules, kicking and biting each other playfully, but unanimous in declining to carry traps. So soon as the iniquitous brutes were loaded, they carefully selected the muddiest spot, and deliberately rolled in it with our trunks. Under this operation, I need not say that every in-any-way-fragile article was smashed.

After much cursing in foreign languages, the

•

animals were arranged in some sort of order, and we began threading our way through the streets of Fort Paul. When we reached the crest of the hill, I could not refrain from taking a Lot's wife's glance at the "Athol Brose," which lay directly beneath me, lazily getting up her steam, and wishing I was going back to England in her at once. But it was no use crying over spilt milk. I had brought it all on myself. *Que diable allai-je faire dans cette galère ?*

My meditations were interrupted by a servant walking up to me.

"Oh! if you please, sir, the General's compliments, sir, and would you mind having his horses taken into Kertch and put in his quarters? He doesn't know where they are, but you can easily find out, he says, if you please, sir?"

Another pleasure! I had a march before me of four miles, rendered almost impassable by mud; I had then to find quarters for sixteen officers and seventy men, and now I had to go prowling about with eight confounded horses desirous of shelter. I had eaten nothing since three o'clock the previous day, and saw little chance of getting anything till night—even if I got it then.

I shall not easily forget that walk, and the

sudden revulsion of feeling when Kertch burst upon my sight. From the point where I stood, I gazed down upon a circular bay, either horn of which rose into a precipitous cliff, and gradually tapered down to a pleasant valley in the centre. Along the shores ran rows of white, neat-looking houses, glistening in the November sun ; and on a hill above the town was a Grecian temple. But it was only a whited sepulchre after all ; closer inspection displayed the fell ravages of war. Kertch has often been compared to Brighton ; but when I first saw it, the parallel could not have been instituted, unless London-super-Mare had been bombarded by the French. Imagine only a few fragments of the breezy chain pier projecting from the water ; the gun-battery, at once the terror and the admiration of the inhabitants, has been blown to pieces ; the steamers plying to Dieppe are lying pillaged on the shore, gutted of their engines ; and, lastly, the entire West Cliff has been riddled by bullets—roofless, windowless, and the clean fronts besmirched with smoke—when my readers have realized all these horrors, they can form a faint idea of what Kertch was when I first saw it.

One thing, at any rate, consoled me: I had a

chance of finding a room in which the walls were not open to every breeze. My shoulders had already given me sundry premonitory twitches that I had been laying in a stock of reviving rheumatism, calculated to last the winter, and which would defy the bottle of mustard-oil I had in my trunk, even were it not broken in the passage.

Before long, we had entered Kertch, no one paying the slightest attention to us. At length I captured a stray Englishman, and from him I learned the road to the Quartermaster-General's quarters. Leaving my men billeted in the market-place, in charge of the luggage, and consoling themselves with bread and cheese, I went in search of their quarters.

How I fared, I shall tell in the ensuing chapter.

## CHAPTER III.

## PLEASANT QUARTERS.

IT was a tedious task, getting my party under shelter; but by the kindness of Captain Thornton of the Artillery, I at length succeeded, and had leisure to look about at my own quarters. These consisted of a magnificent suite of rooms in the High-street; the central apartment was of enormous size, and two other rooms opened out of it in alcoves, before which hung thin damask curtains. The billet would possibly have been more comfortable, had not all the windows been broken; and as there were four French windows, and glass doors in the centre, opening on a balcony, the rooms were airy in the extreme. There was not a trace of a fire-place, and I involuntarily shuddered at the thoughts of the winter I was going to spend.

For a time I was too busily engaged in unloading the "Athol Brose" to be able to attend



to my own affairs ; but so soon as the winter set in, and the ice began forming, I had time to devote to my own domestic arrangements, for nothing could be unloaded till the ice had sufficiently set. I therefore began a careful investigation of my quarters, to see if there was any possibility of keeping the cold out. In the first place, I pasted up all the window-panes with newspapers, and obtained from the engineers an iron stove, the pipe of which was carried out of the balcony window, producing a grand effect. The remedy was perhaps worse than the disease ; for the stove, being the product of a government contract, was about the thickness of half-a-crown, and so, whenever a fire was lit in it, it became red-hot, and the stench was intolerable.

In the next-place, I directed my attention to the culinary department ; for, up to the present, my servants had been cooking my meals in an open gallery at the back of the house, over a camp kitchen. This was not of much consequence, though, for the dishes hardly ever varied from fried pork and ship's biscuit, first steeped in boiling water, and then dried in the frying-pan. Now, however, I laid in a stock of hams, preserved meats, etc., and naturally wished them to

be cooked in a respectable fashion. A room for the purpose was, before all, necessary; and, on inspection, I found a locked door next to the apartment in which my Russian landlord and his housekeeper pigged. This room I made up my mind to have, and therefore waited on the Russ with a polite request to that effect.

He was an extraordinary animal, even for a Calmuck. Once he had been a great merchant in Kertch; but the sack of the town nearly ruined him. Grief and drink had so preyed upon him, that I am convinced he was not responsible for his actions. We were not on the best of terms; for, on the first night of my occupancy, having roused his courage by imbibing copious draughts of Vodki, he had insisted on turning me out of the house, which compliment I returned in the shape of an innocuous kick. Hence, on his flatly refusing to give up the room, I sent for a file of Turks, and broke the door open with an axe. The room was full of the most heterogeneous articles of cutlery and ironwork, which my "Bonos" regarded with flashing eyes, and they certainly made a magnificent "loot." In the midst of the amusement, who should come tumbling in but my landlord, bouncing tremendously;

but he was turned out instanter by two sturdy Turks, who soundly cuffed his ears, whereupon he began blubbering. I went out to pacify him, when he plumped on his knees, kissing my hand, and calling me "Magnificence," "Excellency," and other flattering titles. I took compassion on the poor wretch, and ordered the Turks off; but they evinced no inclination to depart, till I pulled them out one after the other by the ears. Within five minutes, the Russian had stowed his stock away, and made me a peace-offering in the shape of six dozen pounds of wax-candles. After that, we "got on stunning," to use a familiar phrase. But I shall say no more of my Russian friend in this place, as I purpose devoting an entire chapter to him presently, and showing how nothing in the world became him so well as the quitting it.

In my quarters I was certainly compelled to sacrifice comfort to grandeur, and did not like the exchange. It was all very fine living in rooms once inhabited by noblemen; but, hang them, they did not try the experiment in mid-winter. I am certain I was iced through and through in that alcove of an apartment; and, even at the present time, am peculiarly susceptible to cold in consequence. The natural result was, that if any

body wanted to find me, the last place he looked into was at my own quarters; and those became my most intimate acquaintances, whose rooms were best warmed.

And, then, the living all that dreary winter was most unsatisfactory. They say, that ungrateful man becomes eventually wearied of always partridge; but I know I was so of salt-pork—I have never been able to relish it since. And then, if by any accident fresh mutton or beef was served out to us, it was so abominably dirty as to be uneatable. Somehow, though, the quartermaster-sergeants had always legs of mutton for sale. I wonder where they procured them; for my rations never got beyond a piece of the breast and neck, of ghastly aspect. In my despair, I at length fled to the hotel for my daily meals.

Yes, hotel, or *locanda*, whichever you like to call it, kept by one Demetrio, a man of many countries, but originally from Judah, as his beak typified. He had appropriated one of the best houses in the High-street, gave you a very decent glass of claret or champagne for a consideration, and had a most imposing *carte*. My private impression is, however, that his stock consisted of horse-flesh, and a peculiar sort of veitch or lentil,

which entered largely into the preparation of every dish. I need not say that the prices were atrocious, for that was the rule everywhere in Kertch.

Unfortunately for us, the general commanding had treated the town's-people so kindly, that they sadly abused his good-nature, and allowed themselves liberties with the English, which, to say the least of them, were cool, considering we were the conquerors. The old woman who kept the inn, where my subalterns were quartered, was an astounding virago. On an average, she went to the brigade office four times a week with complaints about injury done to her property, and was always allowed to be in the right. The wordy conflicts she used to have with the servants were well worth listening to; for Italian is a glorious language to abuse people in. You never trip up over a guttural word; but the Billingsgate pours out in a beautiful liquid flood, which it is hopeless to attempt to stem. The woman was a Dalmatian, and soon had it all her own way.

I do not think that the Russians suffered to so great an extent, as has been supposed by the plunder of the Turks, though I readily grant it was bad enough. They had held on to Kertch to

the last minute, as was proved by ladies' needle-work being found lying about at the first occupation; but I fancy they managed to carry off most of their valuables. The greatest mischief, to my mind, was committed by the run-away serfs, who plundered and hid away everything that was not too hot or too heavy. Frequently, in our researches, we came across carefully barred-up lofts, which, on breaking open, we found to be full of the most valuable furniture, certainly not the property of the wretched people in whose possession it now was.

I do not think, though, as a general rule, that the inhabitants of Kertch went in for a tremendous quantity of furniture in their rooms. There was a good deal of the sea-side lodging-house element about the apartments; and I have no doubt that elderly landladies, who had seen better days, were up to all the tricks of the trade, as well as any Margate dame. In my room, there were two or three articles of furniture still in evidence, substantial, but terribly clumsy, and mostly *escri-toires*. On the other hand, the Russians are great imitators of the French, as far as lacquered-work and gilding are concerned, and this admixture of Russian clumsiness with French frivolity was

rather absurd to the English eye. One thing I will say in favour of the Russians is, that all their saints had been taken down from the walls in expectation of better times ; and though the small chain lamp still remained suspended in many houses, I did not once see a Mary or a Christ exposed to possible desecration.

Some of these pictures were very valuable ; and Colonel Bonfantis, one of our contractors, purchased a Saviour's head by Yvan, for which he gave the large sum of £40. But it was quite worth it: the outer frame and the *auréole* were composed of solid silver, and the painting itself was a gem, though, I fancy, a copy from Correggio. The two churches, which were also uninjured, contained some most curious paintings ; for the taste of the Greek church apparently consists in getting as many heads as possible into the canvas. Some of the corners of the pictures were completely worn away by repeated kissing. As a general rule, the Greek Confession has a good deal of fetishism about it ; and nothing can be imagined more ludicrous than the way in which the faithful bang their heads against the ground times innumerable. Its external ceremonies are the most material I ever saw ; and I fancy the

Papas keep them so purposely, to maintain their hold on the bigoted followers.

One of the priests at Kertch, a magnificent fellow, with a full black beard, was a great friend of mine, for we talked German, and that was quite a comfort to him. Out of gratitude, when I took my wife over the church at which he officiated, he offered her the choice of any picture she pleased, and she only selected a trumpery print. There were paintings there worth a Jew's eye for quaintness. Would that I had been permitted the selection.

Another very curious point with the Russians, was the manner in which they stowed themselves away from observation. I make bold to assert that, during the existence of the war, there were at least a thousand persons concealed in cellars, etc., of whom we had no cognizance. As soon as the armistice was proclaimed, they crept out to enjoy the pure air, and had evidently been kept well posted up as to everything that happened. How or on what they lived has ever been a mystery to me; but, I presume the women had laid in an ample stock of sunflower seeds, which they are incessantly munching.

I must grant, however, that my knowledge of



Russian female character is very restricted, for I had only one specimen to study—my landlord's housekeeper; but she was a host in herself. I really was afraid of that woman: she was ugly beyond compare, and had a temper which would have curbed Sathanas himself. She saw her power, and wielded it unmercifully. She would waylay me on the stairs as I went in and out, and bury me beneath imprecations. Whenever her wrath failed, she would take shelter in a solemn course of spitting on the ground; which I presume possessed some mystic meaning, for it evidently gave her fresh strength. She would rush into my room at four in the morning, and perform a war-dance round me, after the fashion of the Malays, and smile all the while in the most fiendish manner—what I had done to offend her, beyond turning her out once or twice, I never could discover; but I was the special object of her dislike. The other two officers quartered in the house with me, were on tolerably friendly terms with her; but I was evidently beyond the pale of salvation.

My readers will hardly believe it, but I positively grew terrified with this Hecate; and, on learning that she was always present at the culinary operations, I gave up feeding at home

through apprehension of her poisoning me. It was a decided case of Russian *jettatura*, and I yielded to the influence.

I do not think my landlord, either, would have cut up so rough, had it not been for his house-keeper's remonstrances. She seemed one of those women born to exercise a decided sway over every body that came within her reach; and I will do her the justice of saying, that she never threw a chance away. As for my boy, Henry, she had perfectly paralyzed him—he dared hardly to say that his soul was his own, and slunk about the house with a hanging head, like a well-whipped dog; but I will reserve further description of the lady, till I have had time to know her more intimately.

Another thing that puzzled me was, how the Russians lived during the winter. It is true, that General Vivian gave away a handsome amount weekly to the poor inhabitants; but it passed through the hands of the police inspector, and such gentry are known to possess a greasy and an itching palm, exactly resembling that scale in which the woman weighed the money Ali Baba brought out of the thieves' cave. Everything eatable was at an enormous price for a long time,

and the poor Russians must have suffered severely. For more than two months I provided the German schoolmaster's family with meat, which they accepted most gratefully; and from that I can form some idea of the sufferings the lower classes endured. And yet they were never known to complain: you might, perchance, see a wretched old woman prowling about the coal wharf, gleaning lumps of coke and dust, but they never took to begging, as is the usual resource of Slavonic races, when they are hard up. Always excepting the housekeeper, who, I trust, was the very worst of all Moscovs, I formed a very favorable opinion of our enemy.

In fact, how could you ill-treat men, who, if you lifted your hand to them, cowered down and kissed it reverently? For the slightest service, your hand was raised to their lips, and in every case, they assumed a crouching posture before you, thoroughly suggestive of their Eastern origin. I think that this was the substratum of my liking for the Russians; for every man in his heart likes to be treated as a small demi-god, if not by the outer world, then by his wife and family. And so, when my Russian host never approached me in his lucid intervals without the most profound signs of

respect, I unconsciously added inches to my stature, and fancied myself somebody. I can quite appreciate the disgust the Indian nabob feels when he returns to London streets, and finds that the *plebs* are not disposed to honor him with the *Kotou*. There is something pleasant in commanding and talking in a loud voice, and long after my return to civilization, I found myself ordering Cabmen about in a way which set their honest English blood boiling.

That this will never be altered in the East, I feel convinced ; for kindness is universally ascribed to fear. Who knows whether the propagation of the Gospel may not have had much to do with the late awful mutiny in India? At any rate, I am inclined to agree with the O'Connor Don, that there are countries in which a man has a perfect right to "wallop his own niggers."

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE NIGHT ALARM.

“REMEMBER, M'Alpine,” were my last words, as I stepped over the side, on landing at Fort Paul, “we shall all dine with you on Christmas Day.”

“That you shall, my boys,” the hearty old skipper replied, “if the ship remains here so long.”

I entertained no fears on that score; for the interesting cargo on board the “Athol Brose,” consisting of shot and shell and 32-pounders, was consigned to myself, and I had no intention of losing my Christmas dinner by any indecent haste.

I had one great cause for consolation: two other ships had come up, and the business of unloading proceeded very slowly as regarded the “Athol Brose,” as we were short of boats. Still, I hedged my Christmas dinner by investing in a

couple of geese and half-a-dozen fowls to fatten up, although I believe my servants devoured them, and swore they had been stolen. At length, one happy morning, I found the bay one sheet of ice; the water had been so suddenly arrested by the frozen breath that passed over it, that the very ripple could be distinctly traced.

My Christmas dinner was saved, and I was happy — that is to say, as happy as a man can be who has rheumatism in both shoulders, and is compelled to walk some twelve hours a day in boots weighing but little under half a ton a-piece.

Still, you must not suppose that I led a life of leisure; for a subaltern officer in the field is, I firmly believe, begrudged even time for sleeping. So soon as the ice was sufficiently set to bear, fatigue parties were sent down to the ships to land the stores; and they worked with a will, for the Turks were destined by nature to be porters. The weights they carry in the clumsiest fashion are astounding. Of my party, each man thought nothing of carrying two quarter-casks of ammunition from the ship's side up to the Museum, a distance of at least half a mile; and this not once, but half-a-dozen times a day.

After this task was completed, came that of landing the guns. This was effected in a very simple and primitive way : planks were laid down on the ice from the ship to the shore; the guns lowered on to them, and dragged ashore by half a regiment of Turks, tugging at ropes passing round the cascabel and trunnions.

It was a very curious, and, I may almost say, picturesque sight. At the given signal, the Turks dashed away at full speed, the officers running by their side; for delay, proverbially dangerous, was doubly so here, as the ice might yield to the weight, and the gun be lost. Indeed, this did occur on one occasion; for, on hearing the ice crack, the Turks, like great children, instead of pulling, stopped to see what the row meant, and the gun slowly fell through, to their intense delight.

The gun factory at Topkhanèh is about the only creditable thing connected with the Turkish government; for it turns out very handsome brass artillery. We had thirty-eight of these heavy guns, in addition to the seven field batteries; and, I assure you, it was no joke landing them, and getting them mounted on their carriages, which came ashore piecemeal. The hardest job I had

was mounting a mortar in its bed; for it seemed for a time as if the sheer weight of metal, and the awkwardness of getting a purchase, must defy all our efforts. However, the Turks effected it somehow.

The best part of the business was the delight my "Bonos" took in every thing they did. One fellow among them was held in high esteem, because he could write Arabic numerals, which proved of great assistance to me, as, in tallying, it was very difficult to understand the Turkish figures. As a rule, the Turks are deplorably ignorant; and not one in ten of their officers can even write his name. The most intelligent class is that of the lieutenants; for they hope for promotion, and therefore study; but so soon as they have obtained it, they fall back into laziness. I fancy there is no chance of any change being produced in this respect, in spite of the efforts of the European instructors, who, anxious to earn their pay honestly, are defeated by the combined obstinacy and sloth of their pupils.

At length the eventful Christmas Day arrived: the "Athol Brose" was still in the harbour, and M'Alpine duly expecting us. To tell you the truth, I had been a tolerably constant visitor to



the ship, continually having some important business-matter to arrange just about dinner time; and my worthy Caledonian always thought it would be better settled over a glass of whisky toddy, which of course pre-supposed dining.

In full-dress uniform, we proceeded at a slashing pace over the ice at sharp four, determined to have one jolly night of it at any rate. When we reached the ship, however, we found that we had an unexpected ordeal to undergo; the worthy Captain had been reading up the history of Kertch, and found that the Cossacks had before now crossed the ice from Taman; then, why should they not do so again? To guard against eventualities, he had, therefore, dug a large trench all round the ship, loaded his two guns with rusty nails and langridge, exercised his men with small arms, and stood on his quarter-deck like Ajax defying the lightning.

The result was, that we had to climb up a twenty-four foot ladder, placed obliquely from the ship's side to the edge of the ice, and any man who allowed himself to be overtaken by liquor, would stand a chance of a cold bath on returning to shore. Just at this moment a delicious aroma of roast beef was wafted to our nostrils, and,

reckless of consequences, we rushed up the ladder.

M'Alpine was a regular trump. Although officers had come off to make fabulous offers for stores, though champagne was quoted at twenty pounds a dozen, and preserved meats were at extraordinary high prices, he had kept his word to me. He had reserved a three-dozen case of champagne and ditto of hock for our Christmas Day, and his eyes sparkled as he led me into the cabin, and called my attention to the display.

The dinner was glorious; we had salmon and lobster sauce, plenty of side dishes, capital soup, and above all, the historic round of beef, which had been kept hermetically sealed for the occasion. The pudding was also a great success, and the daring cook had actually invented some jellies. Good gracious, how we did eat! It reminded me of the old story of the boy, whose father advised him to eat for to-day and to-morrow, and objected that he had not yet eaten for yesterday and the day before. That Christmas dinner is one of the few oases in the desert of my Kertch experiences.

After dinner the usual loyal toasts were drunk, not forgetting a merited compliment to

myself as the originator of the feast. After a digestive pipe in the first mate's cabin, built to hold two, and into which a dozen squeezed, we returned to the saloon to demolish a monster bowl of punch. Little did we suspect, though, what was coming: a Scotch assistant-surgeon was lustily singing his one song with a chorus of "Barrin the door, oh weel, weel, weel — and a-barrin the door, oh weel!" when a tremendous trampling was heard on deck, and somebody came tumbling down the companion like "half a hundred of bricks." It was a Staff Sergeant with a message from the General; the Russians were advancing in force, and the guns must be mounted that night on the heights. The messenger's harangue terminated, "and if you please, sir, the General's compliments, and the last officer on shore will be broke."

It was the work of a second to reach the deck: we swarmed down the ladder. Halloh! what's that? Oh, only Nicholson taking a bath. Well, boys, we can't wait to pick him out. A race at full speed ashore; our quarters no sooner reached than there were shouts for horses, fur coats, gloves, caps, revolvers, swords, long boots and pocket pistols — uniforms torn

off and thrown anywhere, biscuits thrust into haversacks, confusion of every description ; guns firing about the town, fife and drum braying, Turks shouting, orderlies galloping up and down the streets, lights flashing in every window, the shrill trumpet of the Chasseurs d'Afrique sounding the "boot and saddle," and within half an hour I was riding off with a 32-pounder dragged by six hundred Turks, who started at a hand gallop, and upset it most ridiculously in the mud, while turning the first corner we came to.

What a night of it that was ! We all worked hard ; but it was not till twelve the next day, that the guns were all mounted on the heights. Fortunately for us the Russians did not arrive, for one of the officers had cleverly managed to convey the 24-pounder shot to the 32-pounder battery, and *vice versa*.

From this night, I knew no peace for two months ; no sooner had I turned in to sleep, than the alarm sounded, and the same dull round recommenced, against a foe who never came. It was not till the armistice was signed, that I knew an honest night's rest, for, not satisfied with real alarms, our General was good enough

to give us feigned ones at the most inconvenient moments. All I derived from it, was an increase of my rheumatism, which still acts as a most unpleasant reminder of my campaign. But I endure it like a hero, and thank my stars that it is no worse.

## CHAPTER V.

## ONE NIGHT OF IT.

**A**LTHOUGH I fully appreciate the public dislike for anything smelling of the "shop," I have ventured to devote one of my chapters to military details; as affording a further proof that the privilege of wearing gold-lace, is now and then bought at a price.

I had just returned to my quarters, jaded with a long day's work, and had hardly completed the preparations for my dinner. These were simple enough in all conscience: for they consisted in uncorking a bottle of Worcestershire sauce, a condiment which entered into every culinary combination. I had, then, just dug a hole in the centre of the slab peas porridge, into which the beneficent liquid would be poured, when I was startled by a heavy tap at the door. In stalked a Sergeant with the iniquitous order-book; and imagine my disgust on reading the following:

"The Officer second in command will proceed *immediately* with escort, to take over military stores arriving from Yeni-Kalèh."

"The escort is at the door, sir," the sergeant added, maliciously. I snatched up a mouthful of bread, took a pull at the rum bottle, and went out into the thick, incisive sleet.

I never came across such sleet as that in the whole course of my life. Hailstones were comfortable in comparison with it, for it appeared to consist of icy pins and needles, all directed with malice prepense against your face; add to this, that the damp froze on your beard, and seemed to be tugging at it viciously, as if it must come out. There was no compromise—and my readers may imagine how jolly we were, as we stood on the bleak road for two hours, awaiting the arrival of the convoy.

At length it arrived, consisting of some seventy mules, loaded with boxes of shot and shell; and the officer in charge very readily handed it over to me. My next duty was to house it, and I gave orders to set out for the Museum. It was now 9 p.m., and I had a prospect of bed in two hours. Along the road my chief occupation was riding up and down the convoy, pipe-hunting, for the Arab

Muleteers smoked away amid the powder barrels, as if there was an impossibility of Turkish service powder exploding. I need not say that it was unsuccessful: a man caught in the act, would suddenly thrust his lighted pipe into his high boot, but, so soon as my back was turned, away he puffed again. At length, however, the Museum was reached, and I tumbled off my horse, key in hand. On reaching the door, great was my surprise at finding a bayonet levelled within an inch of my breast, by one of my own Turkish sentries. Of course, my first impulse was, to give him a box on the ear, which he took good humouredly enough, but not an inch would he let me nearer the door. I shouted for the Mulazim, and he came running up, but, with a multitude of bows and shrugs, confirmed the sentry's prohibition. What on earth was the matter, I thought? However, it was no use wasting time; I knew the Turkish nature too well to try and change their temper, so I sent off a sergeant to fetch an interpreter. In the meanwhile, I accepted the Lieutenant's offer of a cup of coffee.

It will furnish an idea of the recklessness of the Turks, when I say, that the lieutenant's tent, in which a wood fire merrily blazed, was only



thirty yards from a building containing enough powder to blow up London. However, as he did not care, and I was too wretched to trouble myself, I stoically watched the servant thrust the little long handled brass pot into the blaze, and within two minutes, I found myself certainly refreshed, though it is curious, at the first blush, to find yourself eating coffee, instead of drinking it. Then, I began one of my usual lessons in Turkish, which was decidedly practical; holding up my sword, say, I would ask inquiringly, *Bu Turkyä*? He would give me the Turkish word, and I return the English equivalent.

My studies were interrupted by the arrival of the interpreter, who told me that the Turks had orders to let no one pass, without the counter-sign. This was reasonable enough, so I despatched a Subaltern to the Brigade-Major's Office, and spent the intervening time in listening to the howls of the Muleteers, who were furious at being delayed so long, and could only be prevented bolting by the whips of the Superintendents. At the same time, my friendly Mulazim's guard was relieved, and a stern-looking Captain was on the night patrol.

At length my young officer came back with the

word, and I advanced confidently to the Captain. I gave the word; but to my amazement, the Turks closed round me. The interpreter inquired the cause, and found that the countersign was wrong. Some mistake had been made at the Office, which convinced the suspicious Turks that I was a Moscov dog, designing to blow up the magazine, and I was a prisoner, in spite of gold lace and all.

Leaving my escort on the hill, I proceeded with a Turkish Corporal's Guard, and my interpreter, to the house of the Bimbashi of the regiment. He came out, grumbling at being aroused from sleep, and listened to the report. After a lengthened explanation, he decided that the Museum door could not be opened that night, without a written order from the Town Commandant. Such was his ultimatum. The interpreter and myself trudged along, through all the filth surrounding a Turkish quarter, running imminent risk of neck-breaking at every moment, but within an hour reached the Office, worn out. Everybody was asleep here, but I took a malicious pleasure in arousing the neighbourhood, as I was debarred from sleep; and by considerable pertinacity procured the order and the pass-word of the night. Thus armed, I

climbed the hill again, determined to give the Turkish Captain a very severe wiggling.

When I reached the Museum, I found, to my amazement, that the Mules had departed. Of course I assumed that the Captain had relented; but my Sub's dolorous face enlightened me. The Muleteers had bolted in rank mutiny, and had scuttled at full speed into Town. It was enough to try the patience of Job; the convoy seemed to have been enchanted, otherwise it could never have caused me such a complication of annoyances. I was so savage, though, that I would not give in; so I mounted my horse, and went full speed down the hill. A heavy purl, about one hundred paces off, almost wrenched my instep out, but I did not care. In perfect desperation, I mounted again, and dashed into the Town.

After visiting all four land-transport yards, I at length found my ammunition comfortably piled round a huge fire; and everybody had disappeared, save one man fast asleep on some ammunition-chests. Stirring him up with the point of my sword, I asked for the mules; but he only opened his eyes lazily, croaked out "*Bilmem*" (I don't know), and was asleep again. I roused up a superintendent who could speak German, and

repeated my demand for mules; but he declared he could not give them without the sanction of the captain of the yard. Off to his house I rode, determined on having the mules out of him; but although he was remarkably civil, and produced the rum-bottle instantler, he could not order the animals out without written authority from the head of the Land-transport. This from-pillar-to-post-work drove me almost mad, and I was beginning to fancy that I must be the real Wandering Jew; but my passion kept me to my purpose. On reaching the head Transport-office, I had every body out of bed in less than five minutes, and reiterated my demand. It required a lengthy argument ere my request was conceded; but at length I obtained the precious document, and rode back to the yard.

Of course, it required a good half-hour to rouse up the lazy drivers; and they looked at me as if they would gladly yataghan me. Equally of course, they let the boxes drop, and we had more than one narrow escape of being blown up. But I had procured a heavy stick, and laid about me right and left. The recipe was admirable; for within an hour, we were again *en route* for the Museum.

Here I found my poor sergeants pacing about, vainly trying to keep themselves warm; for they had passed an awful night on that bleak, exposed plateau. The sleet had collected on their sheep-skin coats, and they looked for all the world like the snow-men children used to make at Christmas, when snow still lay on the ground. Still, the sight of the mules rekindled some little life in them, for they fancied they saw a termination of their sufferings. As for my poor interpreter, he had wrapped himself up to the eyes, and was sleeping to forget his grief. How we ever woke him again, remains a mystery to me, for he seemed frozen to the marrow; but by exhibiting some rum, we managed to get him on his feet, and I ordered him home at a sharp trot.

It might be assumed that I had experienced trouble enough for one night; but it was not over yet. The muleteers, enraged at having been forced to turn out after a long day's work, doggedly put down their loads on the ice-bound ground, and could not be persuaded to help us to carry them in. In vain did we employ the *kurbash*, and try to flog them into obedience; they merely lay down, and would not stir. Hence, I

could only give the skulking brutes a kick all round, and dismiss them ; and my unhappy six sergeants had to undertake the task of stowing the ammunition in the Museum.

It was a terrible job. The night was pitch dark, and, of course, no lights could be used. Every now and then I heard a muttered oath, as one or the other barked his shins against an angular box ; but the work went bravely on. To keep ourselves warm, my sub and myself set to work piling shot — a very healthy, but far from pleasant operation, as I found to my cost the next day ; for the entire skin of my fingers was peeled off by the frozen metal.

At length—at length—the task was finished: the Museum door swung heavily on its hinges, the clumsy Turkish padlock was fastened, and I was able to dismiss my men. As we turned from the door, the clock of the Upper Town Church struck five. We had been nine hours accomplishing our task, with the certainty that we should have to do it again, when the light permitted us to see the wild confusion we had produced in the usually well-ordered Museum. In such a magazine of death, everything must have its allotted place, and the officer in charge know where to lay his

hand on everything in the dark, as there is no knowing at what hour the enemy may arrive to join in a game of bowls.

I need scarcely say, that from this night I never returned to my quarters without being assured of the countersign, and avoided, as far as possible, any contact with Turks after nightfall. How the rogues enjoyed my troubles! It was quite an event to them to be able to bully a Frankish officer with impunity; and I think I have shewn that they did not miss the opportunity. Fortunately for myself, however, I was transferred soon after to the Adjutant-General, and led an easier life of it, as I purpose to show presently.

I hope my young readers will lay this paper to their hearts; and if, in any future war, their ardent temperament may urge them to join our fighting men in the field, they will remember how I passed only one night, which was as bad, to my mind, as the entire campaign. Perhaps they will leave fighting to those worthy people who make a trade of it, and not repeat the folly of the last war, in which so many of us gave up our proper avocations, in the hope of serving our country. Speaking for myself, I can only say, that I was a very hard "Queen's bargain"; and the govern-

ment seem to have been of the same opinion, for they expressed no earnest desire for a continuance of my services. And I really do not blame them, knowing what I know.



## CHAP. VI.

## MY BIMBASHI.

A VERY magnificent-looking fellow was Ibrahim Ali, Bimbashi of the first field battery, Turkish Contingent. He was an Albanian, with black, flashing eyes and Grecian features, redeemed from effeminacy by a lustrous moustache, that descended in carefully tended points to his chest. But this is all I can say in his favour: in every other respect beside personal appearance he was an utter ruffian. Religion is the only redeeming point with the Turk; for it affords some sort of guarantee that he will not plunder your quarters the moment your back is turned. But friend Ibrahim possessed no religion; he was a strong-minded man, and though he was by profession a follower of the Prophet, he evinced his toleration by coming every morning to my quarters, and shouting to my boy for what he called "Inglis Cahvè," but which, in reality, was

a marmalade-pot full of very strong rum-and-water.

But he had one article of faith, namely, in his mission to exterminate all Europeans. The world would never be quiet, from his stand-point, until that restless race were abolished from the face of the earth. The sight of a British uniform would make his eyes sparkle again, and he looked for all the world like a cat anxious to spring on its master's favourite canary, but afraid of the immediate punishment that awaited such an offence. And, yet, he could be the jolliest comrade in the world if he liked, and many a lengthened conversation did I hold with him on the subject of Turkey. When he had drunk my week's ration of rum, he would thaw visibly, and pat me fraternally on the shoulder, as much as to say, "never mind, old fellow, when we *do* begin to kill the Kafir dogs, I will put you out of your misery in the most artistic way."

But the great quality for which I admired Ibrahim was the amazing coolness with which he appropriated any unconsidered trifles that lay about the room. In nine cases out of ten I did not protest; but if, for instance, I might go in search of a missing revolver, he would say

"True, it is thine!" and hand it back without a murmur. He might have set up as a dealer in many-bladed knives in Piccadilly, so extensive was the assortment he had collected; but it certainly did puzzle me why he displayed such a *penchant* for tooth-brushes, as he was innocent of their use, till I saw him one day "making" his moustache with one of those implements. In a word, Ibrahim was a perfect child of Turkish nature, and demanded careful study, which I gave him.

Ere long Ibrahim and I were chums, and began teaching one another our respective languages. I confess that he got on faster than I did, being aided and abetted by my native servant, an Arab sergeant who had served with our army in Cabul, and was possessed of half a score of English phrases. Ibrahim would sit on his carpet on one side of the stove, I on the other, while Machmet moved noiselessly about, incessantly engaged in rolling cigarettes with a very dirty finger and thumb. During these conversations, I gradually learned much of the Bimbashi's past life; and it certainly speaks volumes in favour of Turkish institutions.

In commencing his life-history, an English

colonel would probably allude to his school-days ; but Ibrahim was more modest, perhaps from the fact that he had obtained no education. So soon as he was of age to earn an honest livelihood, he joined a band of robbers, and for several years enjoyed himself to his heart's content. Some difficulties then supervening with the police, Ibrahim secured his own safety by giving up his chief, and compromising for a severe dose of stick. When his feet were sound again, he found his way to a seaport in the Morea, and enlisted under a Greek pirate. But, as he was too patriotic to fight against his countrymen, he soon "levanted" after robbing the pirate leader of all his honest savings. Having thus attained a respectable position in a country where five pounds are regarded as a large fortune, Ibrahim determined to break with the past, and entered the police service.

Old habits, however, are not so easily thrown on one side ; and before long the bodies of sundry Ryots were found in the vicinity of the town, suspicion pointing to my friend. So strong, indeed, was it, that Ibrahim could only save himself from the consequences of the conspiracy formed against him, by handing over all his

money, and spending seven years in prison. At the end of that period, a person was required by the Turkish Government for a delicate mission — neither more nor less than to remove a Mountain Pasha, who gave a bad example by refusing to pay any taxes, and Ibrahim was selected. He performed his duty so well, by entering the Pasha's service, and shooting him one day when out hunting, that a grateful Government at once gave him a commission as Lieutenant, feeling sure that he would prove a credit to his country.

Nor were they mistaken; and although Ibrahim performed no tremendous feats in the campaigns in which he was engaged — indeed, his enemies said that he always bolted on the first shot being fired — he grew so fat that he was in a fair way of being promoted to a Pashalik, when the contingent was handed over to the British Government.

I have already said, that my Bimbashi had an undying hatred for the English, and he certainly had good grounds for his animosity. Granted that he only received his pay once in three years when at home, and had it now monthly — but then, think of the perquisites of which he was

defrauded. In the good old times, he received twelve rations, daily, in kind, and by selling the surplus, supplied himself with pocket-money; but best of all, he kept the regimental accounts, and never removed from the roster dead men and deserters, whose pay he appropriated when the triennial settlement came.

On joining the Contingent, Ibrahim had a gleam of hope; he would compel his men to pay him "bucksheesh," and thus cover his losses to some extent; but here he was fated to disappointment. The Brigadier-General paraded the artillery one fine day, and told them, that although he was the last man to interfere with their private arrangements, he would not put up with extortion. Hence, if any private had just cause of complaint against a Turkish officer, for bullying him out of a present, he need only come to the Brigade Office, and the General would be ready to flog the delinquent. This was the reason why Ibrahim believed that the world would never run in the right groove, until the Kafir dogs were exterminated, and I really cannot blame him.

For a time, I attempted to civilize Ibrahim, to a certain extent, by describing the marvels of England; but his impertinent stolidity beat me.

Often did I feel inclined to kick him, when, after tying my tongue in knots, while attempting to explain the working of the Electric Telegraph, he would simply reply "Bosh!" or suggest that I was laughing at his beard. It was the same when I showed him a chart of the country round Kertch; the idea that a man could find his way by means of crooked lines on a piece of paper was rather too good—and yet I believe that Ibrahim admired me for trying to humbug him, because it afforded him an opportunity for proving his own sagacity.

Equally futile was the attempt to drive into him, that we were governed by our Sovereign Lady—that would not do at all; and though Machmet might back me up with many allusions to his beard, Ibrahim would pull him mildly by the ears, and say that he was descended from the father of lies. However, he never quarrelled with Machmet, for that gentleman had a most unpleasant way of repulsing familiarities, by laying his hand on his yataghan, and never allowed anybody to thrash him but myself.

If Ibrahim put no faith in my yarns, on the other hand, he gave me much original information about my Fatherland. Thus, he was of opinion, that the English and French were vassals of the

Padishah, and had been summoned to fight the Moscov Giaour, because the lives of the Faithful should be spared. If I made any allusions to the Turks at Balaklava, he told me they were ordered to run, because, in defending them, some of the infidel dogs were expended. In his moments of expansion, he would concede that England was a richer country than Turkey; but the reason was very simple. In Lundoon was a vast cave, wherein resided a witch many thousand years old, who sat on a throne of gold. When our Padishah (and here he usually spat in sign of contempt) determined to make war, he proceeded alone to visit Hecate, who handed him over countless paras. It strikes me there is a certain connexion between this story and the old lady of Leadenhall-street, by whom the Hindoos used to swear. By some extraordinary process, the Bimbashi had also heard of our dog-tax. "Your Padishah," he would say, "wants paras; so he go to your house—why you little dog keep? Man, give me paras." Certainly a mode of taxation which has simplicity to recommend it. Still there is something patriarchal in Ibrahim's notion that our Padishah does his own dirty work.

I only had one row with Ibrahim, but that was



characteristic enough. During the alarm that the Russians were coming—which, by the way, I am glad to say they didn't—our battery took up its position. I was full of martial ardour and raki; so imagine my disgust when Ibrahim affectionately tapped me on the shoulder, and said, "Go back to the house, little father; I will fight for you." I threatened him with every possible diabolism; but he showed his white teeth so good-humouredly, that I could not be angry with him long. I pulled out my case-bottle, and we emptied it in reconciliation.

My greatest pleasure with Ibrahim, I am sorry to say, was to "sell" him. Like all Turks, he was essentially an imitative animal, and endured agony till he had learned the right way of using a knife and fork. But there were other things that puzzled him—above all Worcestershire sauce and mustard; and the consequence was, that I invariably placed those condiments on my plate when eating apple pudding. Ibrahim followed my example religiously, and the contortions of his countenance were to me an ample revenge for all his "looting."

It must not be supposed, though, that Ibrahim was ever guilty of any sponging, for that is impossible with a Turk; on the contrary he was con-

stantly inviting the battery officers to dinner, and nothing delighted him more than when we accepted. But it was a frightful ordeal. On one occasion he gave us forty-six dishes, and the feed commenced with cigars and strong brandy-and-water. An ostrich would have been knocked over: at any rate, I know I was, though I ascribed my feelings to the vegetable marrows stuffed with sausage-meat, to which I was not accustomed.

The last time I saw Ibrahim was in the streets of Pera, after we had come down from Kertch, as I shall tell you presently; and, to my amazement, he burst out crying. Asking him what was the matter, he led me to the Cassim Pasha Barracks to see the battery. It was too bad, though: the men had been stripped of the splendid new uniforms they had received from us in the previous April, and had had no rations served out for three days. They had lost caste by their intermingling with the Kafirs, and were thus punished. I went with Ibrahim to the Seri-asker, and received any amount of promises; but I have no doubt the Minister had sold the uniforms long before, and pocketed the money. At any rate, he did so with the 10,000 Minié rifles we gave the Contingent; and probably his appetite grew with what it fed on.

Thence we proceeded to a photographer's in the High-street of Pera, and had our likenesses taken at four pounds a-piece, exchanging them in remembrance. I do not think Ibrahim had the slightest desire then to cut my throat, save in the way of business; and I confess that I often look at his countenance, and wish myself back with him, talking of the past.

But I shall never see him again: my teaching bore such fruit, that he was mixed up in the recent conspiracy and transported. I have not the least doubt that he has been bow-strung, and, perhaps, taking all into consideration, it is a happy release.

## CHAPTER VII.

## BONO JOHNNY.

**W**ILL those readers who have been kind enough to bear with my previous chapters, give me leave to jot down a few more facts about the Bono Johnnies.

I need scarcely say that there was no special love lost between the Turks and myself. In fact, I believe, had the alternative been offered me of spending a year in Turkey, or the same period as Her Majesty's guest at Millbank Penitentiary, I should have preferred the latter.

There was something terribly repulsive in living in daily intercourse with men whom you knew to be steeped up to the eyes in every crime, and who would not have evinced the slightest hesitation in cutting your throat for a couple of piastres. Strangely enough, though, these fellows had some good qualities; they resembled wild animals, that learn to love you through fear of the lash, and ere

we handed them back to the Padishah, they would have laid down their lives for the men whom, six months before, they had execrated as Infidels and Sons of Shaitan.

In justice to the Turks, it must be borne in mind, that they had been worked upon by the scoundrel Greeks, and frightened into mutiny at Biyuk Derèh. They firmly believed, that their transference to Kertch was the prelude for their delivery into the hands of the Russians, and that not one would be left to tell the tale. Prior to the embarkation, entire regiments deserted, leaving their arms piled in camp; and weeks elapsed ere they could be hunted down.

It was natural, then, that they should regard the Giaours with distrust; and the news of the treatment their comrades experienced at the front, only confirmed them in their fears. They were ripe for any mischief when they landed in the Crimea; and worse still, a fatal error on the part of the Commander-in-Chief, taught them their own strength. Major Guernsey, since celebrated for a curious cause célèbre, the Provost Marshal, was broken for acting energetically; and from that moment, the Turks had the game in their own hands.

It was always a matter of surprise to me that they did not kill us all at once, as the shortest way of expiating the insults offered them. There is no doubt now, that we were in very great danger, and a spark would have produced a terrible conflagration. Nothing was done for our protection by the authorities before Sebastopol; we received high pay for increased risk, and the Contingent was in such ill-odour, through the falsehoods propagated about it, that it would probably have been regarded as a happy release had the Russians cut us to pieces. It is notorious, that we were placed at Kertch as a bait, to induce the enemy to advance; and a very pretty state we should have been in, had they come in the early months of winter, before the Turks had begun to appreciate our good qualities.

However, let the dead bury their dead. My fighting days are over; and if I ever go to the wars again, I deserve to have my brains blown out.

The worst of the Turks is, that you do not know how to have them; for their vices run battalion-wise, owing to the regiments recruiting in special districts. Thus, one band of brothers is highly respectable, were it not that to a man

they plunder every thing they can lay hands on : while others, who scorn theft, have not the slightest hesitation about scoring your weazand for a black look. As the Stamboul authorities carefully selected the very worst men to hand over to us, it may be easily imagined what a pleasant task we had before us.

Thus, the Turks had not been in Kertch a week, before they began the pleasing amusement of breaking open the graves, because they heard that the Russians were usually buried in their jewellery. This excellent jest was not stopped till a picket of the 71st shot a Mulazim and three men. Just conceive a lieutenant of Her Majesty's onety-oneth turning resurrectionist—though the Turks regarded it as a mere matter of course.

The greatest misery was to hold such a military status as entitled you to the services of a sentry. Your life was a burthen to you from that moment; for your very dinner would disappear if your groom turned his back. The articles the sentries usually stole were perfectly valueless to them, but a serious annoyance to you to lose; thus, I was insane enough to have my hair-brushes and comb laid out in the sun to dry after being washed; and of course they went; and it was really far from

.

pleasant to be obliged to have recourse to the natural comb, until a fresh supply could be procured from Pera.

At the lazaretto, the scurvy patients stole 750 towels, laid out to dry; and though the strictest search was made, they were not recovered till the men's dinners had been stopped for two days. And yet the brutes had a certain sense of honour: thus, Dr. Gracey, of the Artillery (to whom I here publicly tender my thanks for the attention he devoted to his most troublesome patients), was suddenly ordered up from Biyuk-Derèh to Yeni-Kalèh, and forced to leave his kit with his Turkish servant, who came up with the regiment. A month elapsed ere he arrived with two empty bullock-trucks; but the articles dropped in one by one, till not even a gallipot was missing. Ali, knowing the customers he had to deal with, distributed the articles among the Battery for safe keeping, and not one was lost. Had it not been for this, the worthy Doctor would have had one more cause for grumbling at the confounded service.

I fancy it was such a rarity for a Turk to have any confidence placed in him, that he felt proud of it, and was honest in spite of his teeth. At



Kertch, the men belonging to a village used to select one among themselves as a treasurer; and he held all their pay for them. Our moral Government flooded the East with the called-in small florins; and when the privates received their monthly pay of 3s. 4d., they used to club it together till they had raised a pound's worth of silver. With this they would waylay the British officers, and, with an intense grin, shout in their ears, "Sovran, Johnny?" and we usually acceded to their wishes. As the sovereign was worth at least twenty-three shillings, they made a very pleasant agio, and showed their white teeth with delight.

By the way, it was a curious fact, that they never saluted a British officer. I, who had immense dealings with them, was only greeted as a chelebi (gentleman), while their own greasy officers were treated with the most astounding reverence. Perhaps we did not lick them enough, or familiarity was the fertile mother of contempt.

A Turk is indubitably the laziest animal in creation; and nothing pleases him so much as to sit in the sun vermin-hunting. I call it "sitting," as I know no other term to describe it; but, in reality, it is not sitting or kneeling, but a

sort of squatting on the hams, which presupposes cast-iron muscles. Having ended his sport, he then produces a pipe from his boot, begs tobacco of one, a light of another, and falls into a state of beatitude, between sleeping and waking. I am firmly convinced that a Turk is too idle to think ; or, if he does perform that operation, his thoughts are directed exclusively to money, for saving is his delight. Not merely cash, but every article of clothing he has begged or stolen since he began to walk alone.

In April, 1856, we served out new uniforms to the entire Cavalry ; and the next time they appeared on parade, they were converted into so many Falstaffs. They had simply put on their new uniforms over the old, and stuffed their boots, etc., into their haversacks. The Cavalry officers, feeling a decent pride in the appearance of their men, put a stop to this, as they thought : but they were beaten : the men hid their old uniforms under their saddles, and were all four feet higher when they turned out the next time.

I have already mentioned my servant Machmet, who was a true type of a Turk. Once that he learned to know me, he followed me about with canine fidelity. Each night he slept outside my

door ; and woe to the man who tried to disturb my slumber. Machmet flew at his throat like a bulldog ; and I had positively to choke him off ere he would loose his hold. My English boy, who, to natural stupidity, added the acquired gift of deafness, held Machmet in mortal terror ; and the sight of his glistening yataghan had a powerful effect on the stolid lad's nerves. Machmet used to employ this weapon for every conceivable purpose ; and had a knack of holding it between his teeth when his hands were engaged, which gave him a most truculent appearance.

Nothing annoyed him so much, as when Henry, with honest English brutality, ill-treated a horse he meant no harm, but had been used, all his life, to kick horses in the stomach when he wanted them to go over in the stall. The first time Machmet saw him do this, he flew at him like a tiger ; and I really believe, had I not come to the rescue, would have settled him on the spot. From that time, Machmet watched him in the stable like a cat ; and if ever he was guilty of any crime against humanity, Machmet would hiss and splutter, and his hand play with the hilt of his yataghan, in a manner most suggestive of justifiable homicide.

At length, Henry took to his bed, through sheer funk, and Machmet waited on him like an infant. But he raved so unpleasantly about knives, that I was glad to get him into hospital, where he recovered with astounding rapidity.

Machmet had one fault: he was uncommonly fond of rum; and, in his expansive moments, was wont to boast that he was a Christian. If drinking be a part of our confession, he was certainly a worthy member of the Church Militant, for his powers of imbibition were wonderful. His wages were not tremendous; for he merely had the run of his teeth, and any money my friends gave him; but, owing to my large connection with the shipping interest, he was rarely hard up for a bottle of rum.

He was a picturesque ruffian enough. He wore a fustanell, which would have looked better had it been cleaner; and round his waist some four-score yards of dingy girdle, in which were stuck two silver-mounted pistols, and the inevitable yataghan, all in various stages of dirt.

He was, however, a first-rate cook; and I will do him the justice to say, that he never got drunk before six — simply from the fact, that he was never thoroughly sober. Altogether, he was the

true type of a Turk of the modern school, who had rubbed off his prejudices by contact with the world, and had appropriated all the vices of Christianity.

Grand, too, was his capacity for "looting"; and whenever I had a dinner-party, I had only to tell him the number, and had no fear of him disgracing my hospitality. Where he procured the materials, I was too wise to ask; but my impression is, that he used simply to steal everything he thought requisite for the Bey-Zadeh's table. He was the only man in the force, to my knowledge, who was capable of boiling a brill whole; but I must allow that this was effected by means of a pillau kettle he coolly stole from a regiment. He used to be flogged at least once a week; but you might have flayed him alive, before he would have confessed to a crime. He always looked a deeply-injured man; and made such a potent appeal to my compassion, that I fancy he would have taken a thrashing daily on the same terms.

I am afraid that I have not produced a very favourable impression on my readers by my candid account of the Bono Johnnies; but I can assure them that, were I to utter the entire truth,

no one could read it. I have merely touched on the light side of their character, and described their playful weaknesses. Were I to dwell on the atrocities they committed on the hapless inhabitants of Kertch, people would scarcely credit me; but I can assure them, that hardly a week elapsed during my six months' stay in Kertch, without some atrocious murder being committed. But, faugh! my purpose is not to disgust; I only wish to show that the Turk is "bono" only in name.

## CHAP. VIII.

## “THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER.”

THAT misery makes us acquainted with strange bed-fellows is an old story; but I am sure that war has the same effect — especially if you happen to be acquainted with Turks.

Not that alone, though: no sooner does a war break out, than representatives of the “dangerous classes” proceed to the scene of conflict, anxiously seeking what and whom they may devour. This was more especially the case with the irregular corps to which I belonged; and the furthest confines of the earth seemed to have sent their human vermin to Kertch, for the purpose of preying on the luckless European officers, and rivalling that peculiarly domestic institution of which the true Turk is the most conservative supporter.

Among all these adventurers, only one specimen still remains fixed on the daguerrotype-

plate of my memory: but he was truly a host in himself. Let me introduce you to General Rufus Spinks, Commander of the "Star-Spangled Banner" (fast screw steamer), and sometime Commissariat Contractor to the Turkish Contingent.

The General usually maintained a modest reserve as to his antecedents and relatives; and it was only when Rhubarb Champagne had in a measure thawed his discretion, that you could learn, from chance allusions, that he had been in his day a "whole team and a dog under the cross-bar" among his compatriots. Whence he obtained his title I never learned; but I assume it was for having served as full private in the Texan Rangers, during the Mexican war. In my private opinion, he had been a filibuster; and this impression was confirmed whenever I saw him holding the Bank at Lansquenet or Faro. When he had a pile of gold before him, his eyes flashed dangerously; and he dashed his fluffy white hat down on his forehead, uttering an unearthly yell, which he said, he had learned from the Choctaw Indians. One thing however, I must say in his favour: under all circumstances, he had a clean front to his shirt.



I remark advisedly, front; as for the rest I say nothing.

Altogether he was excellent company, and though he had an unparalleled run of good luck at cards and dice, he would have been a bold man who hinted at unfair play; for the General carried a "tooth-pick" in the collar of his coat, as well as a revolver in the small of his back. Altogether, though he was not the man you would invite home to take pot-luck with your family, he was a famous hail-fellow well met under canvas.

The only wonder was, how a gentleman possessed of such varied accomplishments should have drifted so far out of the course of civilization as to find himself commanding a steamer at Kertch. Well, who among us would like to have his past life too clearly investigated? I'm sure I should not wish it; so I will merely repeat what the jade Rumour said about his antecedents. The greatest of men have been before now obscured by a cloud—then why should not the General find it advisable to leave his fatherland for the benefit of his health?

A "tower" up the Mediterranean was strongly recommended by the Faculty; and who ever knew

a Yankee who would not combine business with pleasure, if he had a chance? Well, a Yankee of "Bawston," having an old screw-steamer, hardly fit for anything but firewood, thought he might as well take a rise out of those "dod-rotted asses, the Britishers;" so he loaded the above-mentioned "Star-Spangled Banner" with "notions," insured her heavily, and appointed the General to command her—with strict orders not to bring the vessel home again.

The General had a pleasant and a profitable cruise; he got rid of all his cargo, and at length came up to Kertch in ballast, where he soon formed an engagement to ply to the Circassian coast, to purchase sheep. A large sum was advanced him, and he speedily set out on his first voyage. Ere long, he returned with an immense flock; at the sight of which our mouths watered; and everybody blessed the Yankee for allowing us a change from the rancid salt pork. The only misadventure which had happened, was, that a violent storm sprang up, just after he got his cargo on board, and he had to slip his anchors; but, of course, the Commissariat would not suffer him to be a loser.

The advent of the sheep produced much the

same effect at Kertch, as the repeal of the Corn Laws did in England: everybody gobbled as if the supply were inexhaustible. Hence, it was not surprising that the General was invited before long to go on another cruise. Unfortunately, he was taken suddenly ill; and, to his great regret, the "Star-Spangled Banner" had to sail in charge of the Mate. So soon as she was out of port, the General recovered, and played at Faro with as much recklessness as if he had a certain Mr. Ferraby for his uncle. At any rate, he must have been descended in a direct line from Midas; for all he touched was turned into gold. Never had a man such luck, and never did a man so deserve it by his affability.

At length the "Star-Spangled" returned; but dire was the disappointment on finding that she had brought no sheep: on the contrary, she had lost her Mate and four of the crew, whom the Circassians had treacherously inveigled on shore, and held as captives of the sword and bow. For four-and-twenty hours nothing was heard but threats of vengeance; and I believe, had we possessed shipping, the Contingent would have been sent to Anapa to avenge the insult—but then!

How can I repeat the sad story, reflecting on

the morality of an (American) officer and gentleman? But, though Plato is my friend, Truth is my sister, and I must drag her from her proverbial well. On inquiry, it was found, that the Circassians had acted in perfect fairness. The General had, on the first visit, slipped his anchor in such eager haste, that he had forgotten to pay for his cargo, much to the amazement of the Caucasian race. Hence his illness on the occasion of the second voyage; hence, too, the capture of the Mate and men; for the Circassians were wise in their generation. When the "Star-Spangled" returned to the coast, not a syllable was breathed about the debt; but the Mate was invited to come ashore and select the sheep he required.

No sooner there, than he and his men were seized and hauled off to the mountains, surrounded by savage Natives, who brandished uncomfortably long spears, which they threatened to apply forcibly, unless the money were paid. Of course, sundry doses of stick were inflicted on the captives, as they panted up the mountain paths, fastened by a long cord to the saddle-bows of the chieftains; but these may be regarded as the interest of the debt.

About three days after these facts were known

to the whole force, they reached the ears of the Commissariat, who invited the General to give an explanation. He modestly confessed to the truth of the story, alleging, as his excuse, the state of the weather; but on being asked why he had not sent the money on the next voyage, he regretted deeply that he had forwarded it to his Stamboul Agent, as he never liked to keep much money about him—for fear of thieves. If, however, the Commissariat would advance the money to release the captives, he would repay them, on his honour, so soon as he reached Stamboul. The Commissariat acted wisely for once: they thought the first loss the best, paid the owing money, and then relieved the General from his duties.

For a while the General strove to live down calumny; but it was of no avail. English prejudices could not be overcome; and he finally “concluded” to leave the ungrateful Britishers; but he kept up his spirits to the last; and when one of our fast despatch-boats was getting up steam for Balaklava, he proposed to race her down.

In the centre of Kertch harbour was a very dangerous reef, with a narrow channel on either side; and the two vessels set out one lovely after-

noon, at full speed. We were all on the quay watching them, and laying bets as to which would round Fort Paul first, when—crash!—the Star-Spangled ran on the very centre of the reef. Boats put off at once to save the crew, who were brought back to Kertch, and the General started two days later for Constantinople, to fetch a gang of men to get her off.

He must have been lost on the voyage, for he never was heard of again, although we had no official record of his demise. Else, why should a much-brimmed gentleman have made his appearance at Kertch some three months later, inquiring for the General, who had unaccountably omitted to remit the proceeds of the cargo? He, however, appeared consoled on hearing that the wreck in sight was once the Star-Spangled Banner, and, being duly provided with certificates of her loss, he went on his way, in some measure rejoicing.

Considering the General's deplorable fate, it was really cruel to say, that he had only carried out his owner's instructions in wrecking the Star-Spangled. I wonder, though, whether the Insurance Offices eventually liquidated?

## CHAP. IX.

## THE MARKET-PLACE, KERTCH.

THE office in which I performed the task of giving old lamps for new ; in other words, exchanging Minié guns for the clumsy Turkish musquets, was situated at the corner of the market-place ; on the first floor of a house, which, in happier times, had been a fashionable Café. The French windows opened upon a large balcony, where I spent the greater part of my time, watching the busy scene going on beneath. Will my reader take his place by my side for a short space—I think I can show him some novelties.

It is eight in the morning, and the fatigue parties come trooping in, wrapped in their greasy grey coats, and requiring the eye of a lynx, to prevent the men escaping among the crowd. Tremendous is the confusion. English Sergeants dash frantically about, on finding that their party of fifty has dwindled down to ten ; and they supply

the deficiency by seizing every masterless man, who has not the sense to get out of the way. By nine, the place is tolerably cleared, the officer of the day steps in to tell me the news; and after a bottle of stout, he too goes off.

The French uniforms dotted about the crowd, intimate to me that it is high time to look after my dinner arrangements, for our gallant Allies have a knack of getting hold of the best. So we go down to the Tatars, who occupy one side, and begin inspecting their wares. We can pass those milk-sellers—my boy procured his bottle of mare's milk for eighteen pence, an hour ago—but here are the fishermen. It is rather a fine display this morning; there are plenty of delicate brill, even though I sigh at the absence of the lobster. I select the largest fish, and begin chaffering for it. The Tatar asks ten shillings, and I offer one, but in the end pay five, with an uncomfortable feeling that I have been done. A loud yell attracts my attention—I turn and see a Tatar frantically following a stout French officer, who has his finger passed through the gill of a fish, twice as large as mine. The Tatar holds out a half-franc piece, and makes many appeals to



his father's grave; the Frenchman walks on like a Stoic. At length the Tatar, maddened by the Frank's calmness, dares to lay his hand on his sleeve to stop him. The Gaul turns with fire-flashing eyes, mutters a five-minutes' volley of oaths, and gives the Tatar an awful blow across the face with the brill. He is cowed at once, and the Frenchman disappears in the distance. I think of my five shillings; and grant that they manage these things better in France.

My next purchase is a whole lamb—nay, do not start—it only weighs some score pounds. I may mention that I once weighed a Commissariat sheep against a hare, and the latter was a pound or two more than the mutton. There are plenty of fine hares hanging up, but I have had a surfeit of them lately. Every way of cooking them has been tried; and they have now degenerated to soup. Chickens, too, are tolerably abundant; but at a price only allowing a General to purchase.

That little matter being arranged, let us take a walk round the booths, where the Turkish soldiers are collected like flies round treacle. What strange messes for honest stomachs! That

cask of stickiness, looking exactly like bird-lime, is Turkish cheese. See that fellow how he laps it down, thrusting his dirty fist into the viscous mass, and then conveying his fingers to his huge mouth. Here are dates, nuts, oranges, apples, Turkish sweetstuff, made of almonds and honey, and piles of coarsely-cut yellow Latakiah, which commands a steady price. But, see, there is a Tatar making mysterious signs to me — ah! I thought so—the rascal has been “looting,” as usual, and displays a lot of antiquities — obtained at Government expense.

The Inspector-General of Hospitals had opened several of the *tumuli* round the town, in the hope of finding antiquities, and was tolerably successful, as the British Museum will testify. But he would have been more successful, had his men set to work earlier; for the Tatars used to crowd in before them, and carry off any unconsidered trifles, which they sold to Connoisseurs in the market-place.

In that corner is the Provost Marshal's office, where English sailors and soldiers enjoy the privilege of being flogged by Turks, who execute their task *con amore*. I wonder what their thoughts are, when they see the blood oozing

from the backs of men, who, before Sebastopol, treated them like the dirt beneath their feet. I fear that they now hit all the more heavily, as a recompense for past ill-treatment. Here is a poor wretch of a merchant sailor, being bundled out after receiving his dose. His face is one mass of bruises, his clothes are torn from his back; but the cause is painfully simple. In his cups, he assaulted the Turkish picquet that arrested him over night; and they fell upon him furiously with the butt ends of their muskets. Had he not the proverbial toughness of the British sailor, he must have been killed; as it is, he seems strangely perplexed; he cannot understand how a man, and a Briton, can have received such a thrashing at the hands of Turks. The smarting of his shoulders reminds him, that they can hit preciously hard if they like, and he crawls down to the landing-place, quite determined to keep out of their hands in future.

But it is time for me to get back to my office: a company have marched up from Fort Paul, to receive 500 musquets in exchange. My first duty is to station sentries all along the stairs, with strict orders to let no Turk pass, else I know that

they will carry off everything lying about; not for its value, but because they *must* employ their fingers. Muzzle-stoppers, snap-caps, oil-bottles, cartouch-boxes, no matter what the value of the article—it will disappear if a Turk come alongside of it. Hence, I wisely pass my rifles down the stairs through my sergeants, and they are stacked in the square.

The Turks take them up lovingly, and examine them with great care; they perfectly understand the use of the sight, and, as a general rule, treat arms well. If an Enfield, however, with its beautiful bronzed barrel, happen to be among the number, how furiously they contend for its possession! So, to end the dispute, I withdraw it, and am at once assailed by fifty fellows, all shouting for the new arm. I fight my way through them, not being particular whom I hit; and as I pass through the door-way, a yell of disappointment follows me.

By this time, the market-place is all alive again: the afternoon fatigue parties troop in, and a fearful Babel ensues. Presently, you see a Turk running at full speed, with a Greek at his heels—the fellow has been looting. At length, the descendant of Themistocles gives up the chase,

and returns to his booth, to find that the rogues have carried off his entire stock of trade. So, during the afternoon, you probably see him sharpening his yataghan; and within a week, half a dozen Turks have been sent to the shades.

A band is heard merrily playing, and a couple of regiments march across the market-place to the parade-ground. They look well; they are tall powerful men, and march with a firm step. Then a field-battery rumbles past, turning corners with a marvellous audacity, and going at full speed along the streets. Indeed, everybody gallops in this wonderful town: order after order is issued, but the Tatars cannot be broken of their terrific speed. Sitting on their high-peaked saddles, as in an arm-chair, they flash past you, and pull up within a horse's length. To look at their animals, you would not imagine that they had the ghost of a gallop in them; but they are very hardy, and though repeatedly tumbling, they never seem to break their knees.

One of the curious things that occurred to me in my wanderings in the market-place was, that the Russians, with all their boasted civilization, were not much better than the Turks. Even their largest shops bore a suspicious likeness to

the open stalls in the Stamboul bazaar; and there appeared no room for that display of wares which one expects to see in any decent town. Now Kertch was a thoroughly fashionable place: it had its boarding-schools as grand as those in Brunswick-square, Brighton; its hotels rivalling the Bedford in size; the streets were wide and handsome, the public edifices superb; but I could not find a shop larger or less gloomy than the most poking all-sorts' establishment in the Seven Dials. I went into nearly every house in the place, but they were all equally mean and dingy; and I could not but come to the conclusion, that Russian towns are in the habit of putting on a very flash coat, which they button up closely, to conceal the dirty shirt underneath.

It must be borne in mind, however, that the market-place we employed was not the real one at Kertch. *That* was a very handsome semi-circular building, with an open parade-ground in front, and with a passage something like Covent Garden market running through the centre. On one side was the Governor's house; on the other, the magnificent flight of griffin-guarded steps leading to the museum. I have no doubt that, before the war, Kertch was amply supplied with

fruit, vegetables, and flowers, for large tracks of the surrounding country had been cultivated; though, before we left, Nature had so re-asserted her claim, that the gardens and fields were all covered with the tawny short grass, which is the characteristic feature of the Steppe.

When night set in, *our* market-place was left to the countless dogs, that concealed themselves during the day, but came out to forage when darkness covered them. They were the most treacherous beasts going: as you walked home in the dark, you felt a sudden snap at your jack-boots, and, on turning, you only saw a pair of glistening eyes peering out behind a booth. So soon as you went on, however, the beast crawled up again and repeated its manœuvre. I have, indeed, been so beset, when going to my quarters late at night, that I have been compelled to draw my sword in self-defence, for some of the animals were as big as young donkeys, and would have been very dangerous, had their pluck been proportioned to their size.

Some of these dogs we succeeded in taming; and they proved highly valuable for coursing. They were of a fine Kurdish breed, with long straight hair, something like our wolf-hounds, and

were very fast. Still, I am convinced they never liked us really in their hearts—perhaps we had not that peculiar smell by which a true Russian is recognizable. At any rate we found flogging far more efficacious than kindness.

Still, they did us good service; for, by their aid, hundreds of immense jack hares were captured. The level steppes were famous for racing; and though the hares were very fleet, they rarely escaped. Probably they began to realize this unpleasant fact; for, one morning, they entirely deserted us, and went within the Russian lines.

It was the same with the fish: after about a fortnight's visit, the delicious brill, to which I have alluded, migrated *en masse*; and they were never again seen in our market. We were, however, properly punished for the reckless way in which we destroyed everything on the first occupation of Kertch: the nets were burnt and boats sunk, and now, when we would have gladly varied our fare, in dire fear of scurvy, we had no means at hand. I am convinced that the wantonness of destruction displayed at Kertch upon a harmless race of beings, was never surpassed in the annals of warfare. And I am sorry to add, that this destruction was only completed by the Turks;



the example was set by men who boasted of their civilization. It was a trade so congenial to Turkish tastes, that they took to it most eagerly ; and when attempts were made to check them, the mischief had been effected.

After all, we have no reason to be proud of the expedition to Kertch. Many gallant actions were done in the Sea of Azoff ; but burning the corn was a folly, for it happened to belong to British merchants. The crafty Russians had sold it to the Greeks so soon as the war broke out ; and they, in their turn, re-couped themselves by selling the grain in England. But I suppose this must be put down among the incidental expenses of the campaign.

## CHAPTER X.

## A RUSSIAN BEAR.

I PROMISED, a little while back, to give my readers some further account of my Russian landlord, and I now purpose to fulfil that promise. I really forget what the ruffian's name was ; but it was Christodulos, I fancy, or something of that sort, with a mysterious surname, composed of all the guttural letters of the alphabet, and laughing Welsh orthography to scorn. Probably this idea emanates from my own ignorance ; for when he read his name to me from the fly-leaf of a Russian mass-book, it sounded singularly mellifluous ; but then he may have been flattering himself. Not being possessed of Mr. Sala's polyglottic powers, I never was able to conquer the Russian language ; and when wishful to converse with those gentry, I made a medley of Turkish, German, French ; and the only two words of Russian I picked up — the first being *caracho*, which I have reason for

H

believing signifies "good"; and *chi*, the vernacular for "tea," which is, by the way, equally good Turkish. I will not answer for the spelling of the latter word, which I suspect should be *tchai*; but, in respect to foreign languages, I decidedly go in for the phonetic system, which saves a world of unpleasant brain-cudgelling.

Apart from his ugliness — which was no fault of his — Christodulos, or whatever his name might be, had one irredeemable fault. The Russian under the *tchin* grade, seems to feel a pride in wearing a sheep-skin coat the whole year round. This article of clothing is, at any rate, convenient; in summer, the Russian turns the woolly side out; in winter, he reverses the process. If the legend of Bryan O'Linn be true — and I have no reason to doubt it — the Celts and Slavons must be closely allied.

Now, I do not deny that a sheep-skin coat is a most comfortable article of clothing: I should be ungrateful did I say so, for my favourite greyhound slept on one through the winter; but that does not justify a Moscov in converting it into a menagerie. I have not the slightest wish to interfere with the liberty of the subject; but I think that, if a Russ indulges in the luxury of

tame domestic animals, the least he can do is to keep them under strict *surveillance*, and not allow them to stray.

I do not know how it was—whether Christodulos' blood was unhealthy, or that an insurrection was going on in his sheep-skin; but the fact remains the same. Never did the worthy gentleman invade my quarters, without my retaining indubitable proofs of his presence. And when you only possess six flannel shirts, it is rather unpleasant to be compelled to burn out the armpit of each over a candle. What do you say, reader?

After Christodulos had been kicked into good behaviour, it was his wont to visit me at all hours. Usually, he bore three bottles of claret under one arm, and three of brandy under the other; holding between his teeth two long nails, which he employed as a corkscrew. Nothing offended him so much, as declining to drink with him; on one occasion he tore some sixty gold-pieces from his pocket, and dashed them on the floor, typifying thereby, I presume, that he was as good a man as I. But it is not pleasant to have a semi-maniac performing a war-dance round your bed, and insisting on your drinking Vodki (especially if you have had more than enough before turning in)

and I was at length obliged to signify a desire for his absence.

Owing to this fact, and various other reasons, I found it advisable to keep my landlord at bay. We remained apart for nearly three months, considerably to the increase of my comfort, but, then, the poor devil was attacked by an undoubted fit of *delirium tremens*. My only surprise was, that he had not been afflicted before, for he drank awfully; whether in order to annoy us by the row he made nocturnally, or for the sake of drowning his sorrow, I cannot say. For my part, I am inclined to accept neither solution. My private opinion is that he went mad from the constant irritation of the old housekeeper. I have told you something about her already; but not all. If I did so, I should have no room for other subjects.

Eugh! I never shall forget my sufferings on Easter morning; the aged dame invaded my quarters, and handing me an egg stained of the now fashionable *mauve* colour, imprinted a kiss on my modest lips. A glass of brandy was powerless to remove the bitter taste. I had been away from domestic felicity for nearly six months, and such a reminder was awful. My only consolation was, that the Chief, who slept in an adjoining room,

had endured the same frightful ordeal before me.

In the course of the day, my boy, Harry, laid a formal complaint before me, that the dreadful old woman had kissed him, and begged me to interfere; and, though I kindly explained to him the meaning, no persuasion would induce him to eat the mystic egg. He evidently regarded it as some potent conjuration; and yet he was happily ignorant of Ovid, who passed his period of banishment, and wrote his *Tristia* somewhere near Kertch.

Well! a Russian doctor was called in—a most potent, grave, and reverend signior, certainly; but his medicaments were apparently contained in an enormous book. He sate by his patient's bedside, armed with a magnificent beard, and a huge pair of spectacles; and spent his time in drinking Vodki, every now and then reading aloud in a high nasal tone. Altogether, he was a most solemn old humbug, and, had he only had a pill, I would have brought him over to this country as a successful rival of old Parr.

But, confound the fellow, he was always the noisiest when I wished to sleep; in vain I shifted my camp-bed all round the room—his voice

pursued me and murdered sleep. He was a perfect nightmare to me ; I used to lie and wait his regular snoring, and then turn round for my own spell of sleep ; but, just at the moment of fruition, he would start off at score, and I would lie, vainly imprecating him, without a chance of sleep for that spell.

At length matters grew so bad, that I implored a hospital surgeon to visit the patient, darkly suggesting a powerful dose of laudanum. Whether he took the hint I know not; but, at any rate, my host died, and the surgeon gained the iniquitous reputation of being the only contingent who had killed a Russian. I was much relieved at the thought that I should be freed from my annoyance; but, in this case, I had surely reckoned without my host. His breath had scarcely been out of his body a quarter of an hour, and his housekeeper had not half ended her yells, when the house was invaded by a 'Papa' at the head of a party of choristers.

The martyrdom I now endured was atrocious; from morning till night the chanting went on; there were relays of young ruffians, delighted to have such an opportunity of exercising their lungs. And it was a "caution," as the Americans would

say. As if that was not enough, the worthy housekeeper bought up all the fish that could be procured in the market, and began a fiery process of frying, which polluted the house with a stench of train-oil. Every Russian, of any respect in the town, considered it a bounden duty to eat a portion of fish in honour of the defunct; washed down with copious draughts of Vodki, while the women evinced their sympathy, by cracking interminable quantities of sun-flower seeds. I need not say that they made an atrocious row, which sadly interfered with my professional duties; but I had a consolation in the idea that the man must be buried.

At length the great day arrived; a magnificent coffin, with any amount of black velvet and gold crosses, was brought into the house, and my landlord safely deposited therein. I followed him to his last resting-place, the least I could do, as he had disturbed my rest so frequently; but was horribly disgusted when I found that he was bundled, most unceremoniously, out of the swell coffin, and hustled into a grave not two feet deep. His fate I could easily anticipate, for there were too many masterless dogs prowling about Kertch and its environs. When all was over, the coffin



was carried back to the Kazan Church in solemn procession, the "Papa" at the head, and I hoped that I should have quiet possession of my quarters.

Vain was the hope! I know not what may be the laws as to succession in Russia, but at any rate, the ancient housekeeper seized upon all my host had possessed, and soon managed to make the house too hot for us. She was incessantly having combats of two with all the servants; and though Machmet mildly suggested the advisability of putting her upon the kitchen fire, as a "first warning," of course I could not give my sanction to such a proceeding, and the old lady fairly beat us.

The crisis came, when my wife arrived. She had come up from Constantinople in a cattle-ship, and had meekly endured all the horrors of a middle passage. When I went off to greet her, I had to climb over the backs of more than two hundred sheep to reach the quarter-deck, so you may imagine the state of the vessel. In fact, my wife positively assured me, that the sheep used to invade the chief cabin at night, and savagely butt at all the compartments. I brought her on shore, (not forgetting the two barrels of bitter beer she had brought with her), in the morning, and took

her to my quarters, where I left her, trying to appease her appetite with an egg, on the principle that—

“An apple, an egg, and a nut,  
You can eat after a slut.”

When I returned from my duties two hours after, I found my wife in strong hysterics, and the housekeeper hanging over her, like a harpy. During the entire period of my absence, this aged demon had been abusing, in strong Russian; and as my wife had brought up with her from Stamboul a very wholesome dread of the Turks, owing to the murders nightly committed in the streets of Pera, this fury had been too much for her nerves. Of course, I immediately turned the old animal out by the neck and shoulders; but—shall I confess it—I allowed myself to be vanquished by a Russian. In fact, we most ignominiously decamped, the old woman indulging in diabolical demonstrations of triumph, as Machmet and Harry removed our traps down the stairs—not forgetting the two barrels of beer.

We were fortunate in our next quarters, for they belonged to a Russian widow, whose husband had been killed before Sebastopol, and who took ad-

vantage of our sympathy by charging eighteen-pence for every collar she ironed. The only unpleasantness we found was in the shape of rats, who displayed a boldness I certainly did not expect, after the humiliation their countrymen had endured in the fall of the Malakoff.

The first night, we put out the candle, and were fast asleep, when I felt a most peculiar movement across my face. I clutched at the object, and found in my hand a slimy piece of gristle, which was soon explained by a sharp bite in my fingers. At once I rushed out of bed, and lit a lamp, and then what a sight presented itself! Down one hole a French kid slipper, three parts gnawed, had been dragged; at another lay a glove with the fingers eaten off; while my wife's travelling-dress was perfectly frayed all round the skirt. The floor was literally alive with rats, most impudent in their nature, as my toes soon testified.

I was compelled to return to bed, where I sat, revolver in one hand, lanthorn in the other, taking pot-shots, which ended by a Turkish guard invading the sanctuary of our bedroom. If a lady desire new sensations, I strongly recommend her to visit the seat of war: she will learn enough to satisfy her curiosity for life. I really believe, that

were I to become Freemason to-morrow, my spouse would evince no wish to learn the dread secret.

But all was not black, after all, in a lady's experience of the Crimea, as I purpose to show in a future chapter. Still I fancy that my wife, like myself, is not sorry at being back again in England. Besides, any glory she might have achieved by her expedition, has been totally eclipsed by the heroic ladies who survived Lucknow. She is beginning to agree with me, that the Crimean Odyssey was a huge mistake for both parties, and that the inconveniences we experienced were a poor compensation for the *κῆδος* she gained.

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE WOMAN IN GREY.

I THINK that I am justified in inserting the following sketch among the others which elucidate my Camp Life, although the events it narrates occurred on the other side of the peninsula. My excuse is, that I heard it from one of my serjeants, who told it me one fearfully cold night, when I was sitting in front of the Museum, waiting to send out shot and shell, for one of those attacks which never came off. I have, however, verified the circumstances since my return home; and, as they bear a certain affinity to Camp Life, I have no hesitation about narrating them here.

You will please to imagine the locale, as the story was told me. I, wrapped in a very warm seal-skin fur-coat, with a cap of the same material, coming over my ears, and carrying a most tremendous sabre—though I had never the chance of trying it, *in corpore vili*, other than a dog; am

sitting on a very pre-raphaelite lion, hailing from Lycia, I believe, and once a crack ornament of the Museum. The Turks, however, have spoiled its beauty, if ever it had any; at any rate, in its present mutilated state, it is the ugliest thing you ever saw. There I sit, gradually freezing to it, though not in the American sense, while my sergeant walks up and down, wishing it were time to strike work.

As I smoke a cigarette, I fall into conversation with him: in fact, I secretly admire him; for he has been in action, where I have never been; and I had a strong feeling come over me, that it should be his to command, and mine to obey. However, I wisely let him know nothing of my feelings, inconsistent as they are with the dignity of a commanding officer, as he tells me the following story, which my readers can believe or not, as they please. In the words of the showman, they have paid their money, and they have a decided right to choose. I must, however, mention, that I have discarded his language, as rather too conventional, and thrown the story into a dramatic form.

The barren plateau, on which the allied armies

were encamped before Sebastopol, was naturally suggestive of many superstitious fancies among the troops. The outlying sentinel, with his eye at the uttermost degree of tension, to detect some crouching spy, eventually saw imaginary forms around him, and the darkness became peopled with the denizens of another world. Many stories of ghostly manifestations were current, very few of them possessing any other foundation than the imaginary fancy of the credulous soldier; but there are one or two authenticated stories of ghosts, one of which I purpose to tell here.

A soldier, on being relieved from guard one winter's night, swore stoutly that he had been haunted during the whole period of duty by a woman in grey, who made signals to him, which he, good Catholic as he was, declined to follow. He was laughed at; but when the sentry on duty the next night told the same story, the most incredulous began to believe. When a week had passed away, and each night the same occurrence happened, the regiment was so infected with alarm, that the captain of the day thought it high time to interfere. For this purpose, he summoned to his counsels one Patrick Leary, a colour-sergeant, who was popularly supposed to

fear neither man nor devil. The captain lent the non-commissioned a revolver, bidding him fire if he found it absolutely necessary; but to do his best to capture the woman alive. Mr. Pat took a hearty drain of rum and went on sentry-go, much to the relief of the men warned for that night's duty.

It was a dark misty night when Pat commenced his dull round, and it was enough to make any man feel uncomfortable. The gallant Pat, however, so long as the effect of the rum lasted, whistled the "Night on which Larry was stretched" *sotto voce*, and stamped his feet to restore the chilled circulation. Somehow or another, though, he began to grow very lonely, and almost wished that the ghost would come, if only to bear him company.

His wishes were soon fulfilled, for hearing a slight sound, and raising his rifle to his shoulder, he saw a dusky form gibbering at him in the distance, Pat began mopping and mowing in reply; and the woman, apparently encouraged by this, drew nearer. Pat laid his firelock on the ground, as if to encourage the other, but placed his hand carefully on his revolver. There was nothing like being prepared; but if it were a



woman—the thought, however, fairly turned the honest sergeant's mind. Ere long, the figure approached so near, that Pat was enabled to challenge—

“ Who goes there ? ”

“ A friend ! ” the stranger replied, in a musical, though foreign voice.

“ Advance, friend, and give the countersign, ” the sergeant mechanically said.

Just as the figure approached Pat, the moon broke out from behind a cloud, and enabled him to see the woman's features. The most astounding thing was the immense grey beard the figure wore. Pat, as a traveller, was accustomed to strange sights ; but this surpassed all. In a second, though, the truth flashed upon him, and he made ready for action.

“ Come here, my darlint, ” Pat said, artfully, but the woman did not seem inclined to obey. The moonlight had evidently destroyed the stranger's calculations. She fell back a step or two, and then turned to fly. But it was too late ; Pat was after her with a tiger's bound, and, impeded by her petticoats, she stumbled and nearly fell. In a second, however, she recovered, and turned on the sergeant with a most uncomfortable-looking yataghan.

"Tear an' 'ouns'," the sergeant shouted, "the woman's the devil. I can stand nails, but these are rather too sharp."

A low mocking laugh burst from the stranger's lips, as he tried to get between Pat and his musket. But the sergeant was on his guard; pretending to fly, he managed to bear down within grasp of the woman, and caught at her capote. The next moment, the yataghan had passed through the fleshy part of his arm; but he did not relax his hold. He grappled with the stranger, but meeting with an unexpected resistance, he drew his revolver. The stranger clutched at it with frantic energy, and a terrible struggle ensued, which terminated by the pistol suddenly exploding; and the stranger fell to the ground with a groan, while Pat, weakened by the loss of blood, followed the example.

The quarter-guard, aroused by the shot, soon hurried up to the spot, and both were borne into camp. The stranger was placed in a hut, and a surgeon fetched, and it was evident that the ghost in grey was a fine-looking old man. He was, however, declared to be in a very dangerous state, for the ball had passed through his lungs. His

condition was kindly explained to him, and he told his story readily enough.

His name was Constantine, and he was by birth a Pole. Having been engaged in the revolution of 1831, he was saved from the death that fell to the lot of his comrades, to endure a worse fate. He and his family were transferred to Russia, and he was forced to perform the most degrading duties in the secret police. For twenty-three years he had endured the humiliation, for the sake of his wife and child; but he little reckoned what was in store for him. When the war with the allies became imminent, he was ordered with his family to Sebastopol, for he was a perfect French and German scholar; and when the campaign commenced, he was compelled to risk his life nightly, by going out to spy the progress the enemy made. Death stared him in the face either way: if he refused, the sentence passed upon him at Warsaw still remained in force, while, if he obeyed, he was in hourly risk of detection.

Why not desert? you will ask; but the Russian police were Machiavels. His daughter, Eudoxia, a lovely girl of three and twenty, was taken into the governor's house, ostensibly to protect her

from the horrors of the siege; but Constantine was given fully to understand that her life depended on his fidelity. The poor father was sorely distracted. His hatred of the Russians was counter-balanced by his love for his daughter, the only treasure he possessed in the world; for his wife had succumbed under the privations and exposure of a winter journey across the steppe.

Need I say that the father triumphed over the man? Constantine was a nightly visitor to our lines, and by the cleverness with which he played the character of a French or English private, long escaped detection.

At length a dreadful ordeal was offered him; he was told that if he could only induce an English soldier to desert, from whom some valuable information might be obtained, his sentence would be reversed, and he would be free to go where he pleased with his daughter. Maddened by the thought of liberty, Constantine attired himself in a feminine garb, hoping thus to attract some sentinel from his post. He would then wound him, though not dangerously, and drag him into the Russian lines. In fact, it grew a monomania with Constantine, that he must catch a Briton alive; but, unfortunately, in Sergeant Leary, he caught a Tartar.

Such was the story he told, and which aroused considerable interest among the hearers. It reached the ears of Lord Raglan himself, who visited the prisoner, and bade him be of good cheer: no harm should befall him. But Constantine shook his head sadly; of what value was life to him now, when he was separated from his Eudoxia? I need not say that every kindness was shown the poor fellow, and doctors vied with each other in their attention to him: the wretched conical ball was apparently embedded in his back-bone, and there was no prospect of moving it.

Pardon, reader, such a common-place story, but the end is not yet.

\* \* \* \*

Two days later, Sergeant Leary, who had bound his flesh-wound up, and laughed at it, was at work in the front parallel. He was sitting in the trench, smoking a very dirty short pipe, and growling inwardly, whenever his wound gave him a twitch. It was a lovely night, and double caution had to be exercised; for the Russians were all alive, and seemed shooting for a wager at the men in the trenches. Pat philosophically took off his shako, and placed it on the top of the

earthwork. In five minutes he took it down again, and lo! there were three Minié balls clean through it.

"Whirrah!" said Pat, as he comically surveyed the damage, "here's a pathent ventilator."

"Lucky for you, Sergeant Leary," a young ensign remarked, "that your head wasn't in it."

"Arrah, your honour, and do you suppose that those dirty bullets would go through my head? It's all very well with a regulation-shako, for we know what that is made of; but an Irishman's head is formed of stronger materials."

A suppressed laugh ran along the trenches, but Pat was not at all put out.

"Boys," he remarked with a solemn pathos, "since the unlucky day that I landed in this filthy country, not a night has passed that I haven't put at least a pint of bad sperrits into this carcass of mine; and there is not a man among you can say he has seen me the worse for it. It wants a purty daisunt head to stand the racki we get up here, for it would take the roof off a house; so I think my head is safe against a ball sent by Russian powder. Hilloh! what's their game now, I wondher?"

The men jumped up involuntarily, for the firing

from the Russian guns had grown tremendous. Forgetting all caution, they sprang on the breast-work, naturally supposing that the enemy meditated a sortie. They were in perfect safety, however; all the bullets were at present directed at a single figure, which was crossing the open at frantic speed. Our men cheered heartily, as the stranger passed on, utterly reckless of the shower of lead, and some two or three fellows, Leary at their head, rushed out to rescue him.

Great was the sergeant's surprise though, when he fancied he recognised in the stranger the woman in grey, but minus the beard. But there was no time for inquiry. The Russians had opened all their batteries, as if disgusted at not bringing down their victim; and for an hour the very earth shook with the vibration. Suddenly the fire died away, as we did not condescend to reply to it; the moon retired behind a cloud in disgust, and there was silence for the rest of the night.

In the meanwhile, Sergeant Leary had convinced himself that this Mr. Jones was not that Mr. Jones: the stranger, instead of wielding a yataghan, employed a far more dangerous weapon in a pair of the most lovely eyes ever seen. Then,

in a most seductive voice (Leary swore afterwards that he understood every word, but I don't believe him) she asked after her father's welfare. She spoke in French; and, at any rate, the officer of the watch comprehended her, and sent a party with her at once to head-quarters. Lord Raglan no sooner heard of the heroism she had displayed, in order to join her father, than he gave directions that she should be treated with all possible kindness, and have free access to the prisoner.

Her presence was better than all the doctor's stuff to Constantine. He rapidly recovered; but Eudoxia's duties were not over then. By some stupid mistake, Leary managed to run his renowned head against a Minié ball, which sadly injured his personal appearance; and for some reason or another, Eudoxia insisted on nursing him. It may be that his repeated visits to her father had touched her heart, but what do I know.

\* \* \* \*

All I can say is, that I nursed Sergeant Leary's youngest girl the other day, when I went in for an ounce of tobacco, at a shop not a hundred miles from Leicester-square (to employ the liner's



pet phrase), and was requested to wait and see Father Constantine, who has a very comfortable engagement as interpreter at one of our police courts. With him I smoked a refreshing pipe; and he confirmed all the details of the story I now lay before the reader.

## CHAPTER XII.

## OUR ALLIES.

I WONDER whether we shall ever learn the true terms on which English and French, stood to each other on the blood-stained plateau, before Sebastopol. Was the Belle Alliance so cordial as people would have us believe; and did the two nations forget their old animosity for love?

I have heard many curious stories, how matters went on before Sebastopol; how, after the Redan, French soldiers forgot to salute British officers, or spat on the ground as they passed them. How far this may be true, I cannot say; but, speaking from my own experience at Kertch, I can only state, that the *entente cordiale* did not exist; but in its stead, a system of politeness was maintained, which excluded all idea of friendship.

There were, it is true, valid reasons for this; we had, in Kertch, a crack Hussar regiment, and the

Chasseurs d' Afrique, who did not at all agree about their affair with the Cossacks; while our Infantry regiment, one of the Highlanders, kept aloof from everybody. The French officers wrapped themselves up in their dignity, while the men were all quartered together in the Market Hall. There were no English privates for them to fraternise with; and, unfortunately, no Zouaves to pave the way to pleasant intimacy. Had those merry, reckless fellows been among us, we should have got on much better with our allies, I dare say.

If I must confess the truth, I am bound to say that the French were insufferably haughty. The Malakoff success, and Redan failure had got into their heads; and they quite looked down on the English. Ungrateful men to forget, that, during the whole campaign, we played the part of the dwarf, in Goldsmith's fable; receiving all the blows, while the Great Napoleon pocketed all the honour. I fancy we were more than once on the point of realizing the fable, and dissolving partnership.

Apart from this, the French are not the best fellows in the world to be quartered with. Owing to what they call their administrative talent, which cynics would regard as consummate impudence;

they always contrive to get the best of everything. Thus, at Kertch, though they were only 300 strong, they monopolized the best buildings, and seized the only drinking fountain, regarding it quite as a favor, that they allowed our Turks any water. At Fort Paul, where the marines lay, their conduct was perfectly intolerable, as they held the chief authority at that station and by their arrogance produced many serious coalitions; in which I am proud to say, they were seriously worsted, The Turks knew their strength, and would not allow themselves to be "sat upon."

The only class of Frenchmen who rendered themselves thoroughly popular, were the *sous-officiers*, with my old friend Jean Taureau at their head. With them I found myself more than once fraternising; for they had no particular affection for the present Emperor, and would sit half the night shouting the magnificent Marseillaise, which their officers were compelled to put up with, though they were eminently aristocratic. The Chasseurs d'Afrique, had been sent to Kertch for insubordination; they had mutinied before Sebastopol, because a young Lieutenant had been sent to join them, without going through the Algerian mill; and though Pelissier gave them

right, by cancelling the appointment, he exiled the regiment.

Take them altogether, these Chasseurs were the finest light horsemen I ever saw, in my life; even superior to the far-famed Hungarian Hussars. They were mounted on splendid barbs, wiry as watch-springs, and active as kittens; and the men were not encumbered with superfluities. They wore a light pea rifle, slung *en bandoulière*, and were first-rate shots. I frequently saw them topple over ducks on the ice, with a ball at long range. Every man was as perfect a horseman as the Emperor himself; and this was the only French Cavalry regiment I ever saw, which had no tailors in its ranks. But, then, it must be borne in mind, that hardly one fifth of them were Frenchmen; they generally hailed from every country under the sun.

One of the most curious mistakes into which we have fallen, is the notion, that the French commissariat was so far superior to our own during the whole of the war. I grant that, owing to the permanent character of that department in France, at the beginning the French were superior to ourselves, and were even enabled to help us out with bread for a day or two; but

at the close of the campaign, no comparison could be instituted between the commissariat of the two armies. While our men had luxuries of every description to their hand, the French were positively destitute; but they were far too clever to let the news ooze out. Before Sebastopol, they had no "correspondents" anxious to write themselves up into importance by exaggerating common things; and even the soldiers were ordered to be cautious in writing to their friends. How different with us! I heard, for instance, of a correspondent from Sebastopol, who wrote to his editor a private note, stating that it was all up with us; for he had been in the advance-batteries and found all the guns spiked! The editor was so struck by the importance of this news, that he rushed off to the Horse Guards; but was awfully sold, to find that, in advance-batteries, the spikes are always placed in the guns, when they are unused, to guard against any sortie. Now, if the editor had published this statement, what an awful state the nation would have been in!

As an *ex post facto* correspondent, then, whose revelation will do no harm, I beg to state that, for more than three months, the Chasseurs d'Afrique were left to starve at Kertch, as far

as the Emperor was concerned. Our authorities offered them rations, which they haughtily declined; but they took to looting instead. It was not a pleasant sight to see a sergeant's guard going round to all the shops, begging their loose straw to keep their horses alive; but such was the case. They would go out for miles, too, foraging, and return into town like Birnam Wood, every trooper sitting in an extemporized bower of green boughs, obtained to keep the pot boiling. But this was no concern of ours; if they chose to starve, when we had abundance to offer them, pride was its own punishment; but when they began to loot in the town, it was high time for us to shout. Thus, four Chasseurs stole an enormous copper boiler from the ordnance-wharf, which they broke up and sold to the Jews. I traced the fragments, but that was all; and the speed with which they performed the operation, was most creditable to their industry, if not to their honesty.

Nor did it redound to the credit of the civilized nation *par excellence*, that the Chasseurs destroyed all the excellent sewers of Kertch, because somebody had spread the report that the Russians had buried all their treasures there. The result of

this barbarism was perceptible in the next summer, when choleraic symptoms broke out among us; but the French took no heed of that. They had been disappointed in their search; and it was too much to expect that they would repair the evil. I need not say, that the English were the sufferers as usual, when dealing with their allies. In treaties, political or commercial, the Emperor generally gets the weather-gauge of us; and the result was, that the sanitary commissioners ordered every British officer to chloride-of-zinc his house at his own expense.

I need hardly say, that the Contingent was enormously looked down upon by the Chasseurs; for there was a spice of jealousy at work. The French had also tried to form their Contingent, but had suffered an ignominious defeat; hence they were only too glad to seize every opportunity to ridicule our goings on. I am happy to say, then, that the efforts we made rendered our soldiers as nearly perfect as they could be; and this added to the bitterness the French felt. In short, we might be allies in name; but it always struck me like that existing between the lion and the jackal.

Another favourite argument the Gallo-philists



urge on behalf of the French trooper is, his great abstemiousness from potent drinks, all resulting, we are asked to believe, from small wine being served out instead of demoralizing rum. Admirable theory, I grant, but the propounder has probably never visited a French canteen; if he had he would not employ such an argument. I venture to say, we have no such confirmed drunkards in our army, as will be found in the Algerian troops from highest to lowest. The variety of these spirituous liquors, from *parfait amour* to *absinthe*, is astounding; and, owing to their adulteration, they are far more pernicious than our honest rum. The consumption of the nerve-destroying *absinthe* is, indeed, something frightful; and it carries off yearly a tremendous deodand. Believe me, the "Kertch fever" was as fully developed among the Chasseurs as it was among us; and that is certainly saying a good deal.

There is one thing to be urged in favour of the French troops; and that is, their extreme cleanliness. They are the most shirt-washing troops I know; and though the Turks employ a large quantity of water in summer, I fear they consider dirt in winter in the light of an extra garment.

You never saw a Chasseur who was not carefully shaved every morning, for they did not patronize the beard movement, except so far as the trimly-brushed and cosmeticized moustache was concerned.

Taking the Chasseurs as a specimen, I should regard the French soldiers as rather a melancholy race of men. Perhaps the strict barrier raised between themselves and their officers may have something to do with this; but they had none of the careless gaiety of the Zouave, or even the Voltigeur. To my mind, they resembled a party of conspirators, deeply annoyed by the existing state of things, but finding it impossible to overthrow it. As far as I was concerned, I have no fault to find with them: I had a tolerably extensive stock of French literature by me, which they heard of, and were very glad to borrow stray volumes, when I could spare them, and they made a promise of returning them punctually. But, with the exception of Jean Taureau, I did not find one of them really jolly, and even his mirth had something very savage about it.

Probably all this has changed since Magenta: the Emperor has shown himself at the head of

his troops, and received his baptism of fire, in a manner most creditable to himself. The French soldier now-a-days only looks to personal bravery; he expects his officers to risk their skins before the line, for they are better paid, and if they are shot they leave room for promotion. Every Frenchman, in the present day, fights on his own account; and even the little Corporal himself, were he to return, would be compelled to gain the admiration of his troops by personal bravery, as well as able tactics. The present Emperor has indubitably shewn that he possesses a vast amount of passive courage; and, though he may have miscalculated at Magenta, the fortunate arrival of Mac Mahon turned the tide of victory. The French gained the honour of the day, and the Emperor's *bévue* was condoned on account of the risk to which he exposed his own person. Still, I humbly think that the throne of France is hardly purchased at such a risk.

I am only writing from personal observation, and, judging from what I saw of the French troops in the Crimea, I should say that the Emperor held a very low position in the opinion of public men. At any rate, whenever Jean Taureau drank the health of Napoleon, he was

always careful to qualify it by adding, "the old one, I mean."

If the whole army is imbued with the same opinion as the Chasseurs d'Afrique, 600,000 bayonets will prove a menace rather than a security. But what do I know?

## CHAPTER XIII.

## A FRENCH JOHN BULL.

**I**F any of those hardy veterans who fought the French in the old war to the tune of "Britons never will be slaves," and entertained a firm conviction that an Englishman is equal to three Frenchmen any day—if any such, I say, still exist, I sadly fear they must look down upon us of the present generation with considerable disgust. Indeed, judging from the invasion-panic, the proportion would almost seem to be the other way about.

Such prejudices as these, unworthy of a great nation, have been removed by association; and the Crimean campaign and recent war in Italy showed us the admirable qualities of our allies, and caused us to reverse the verdict. Man to man is the fighting odds we should prefer.

One article of faith, however, the British public still adheres to with unshaken constancy—that

foreign soldiers are all such little men. The origin of this delusion is very simple. We Cockneys, never seeing any troops save our beef-fed Grenadiers and Guardsmen, grow impregnated with the idea that our army is composed of all such Anakim; the regulation five feet five inches certainly slips from our memory.

I grant that, in time of peace, our men are generally taller than the French, because we are enabled to pick and choose, and the conscription is forced to take them as they come; but when war presses us sharply, our ranks are crowded with stunted lads, not only shorter than the French, but physically nowhere when compared with them. I saw at Scutari, in 1855, boys in hospital, who sickened at the very idea of the Crimea, and had to be drafted home again: for fear had completely paralysed them.

Granted then, that the French line are short, but uncommonly active men, their *élite* regiments can display as fine specimens of manly vigour (that sentence is penny-a-linish, but never mind) as any in our ranks. Just take the Chasseurs d'Afrique, with whom I was quartered, and I make bold to say they are the finest light cavalry in the world—superior to the renowned Hun-

garian sabreurs. The regiment to which I specially allude was a wild composite of nationalities, every European and Eastern race being represented in it, from the fair-haired Alsatian to the swarthy and grinning Bedouin. Coquettishly dressed in light blue and silver tunics, carrying a long pea rifle on their backs, and mounted on fiery Arab barbs, they offer the beau ideal of a trooper.

I was very fond of talking to these men, for they could tell many a wild and ghastly story of Algeria; of old Bugeaud, as he led them to victory in his nightcap, or of Yussuf, whose life has been like a fairy romance. But, of all, I was most attracted to Jean Gendron, the troop sergeant-major, better known as Jean Taureau. He was frightfully strong, and so broad-shouldered that I really believe he would have taken less room lying down than standing up, and he derived his Tauric prænomen from the reputation he had of being able to kill an ox with one blow of his mighty fist, which was, in truth, as large as a gold-beater's ensign.

Strange to say, though, friend Bull took no pride in his strength: sufficient to him was the knowledge that he possessed it; but he did feel somewhat vain (for a Frenchman) of his know-

ledge of English. I beg to remark here that he did not know a single word save "Godam," but that word he repeated with such reiteration, and with such expressive gestures, that it was worth a perfect vocabulary. Mr. Bull would invite you to the Canteen to drink a glass of Godam; if he learnt to love you he could not better express his feelings than by calling you a Godam Anglais; but, if you offended him, he always fell back on French. In fact, the use of that mellifluous word was a very fair gauge of the favour in which you stood with Jean Taureau. When I add, then, that he employed it in every sentence he did me the honour of addressing to me, you will see how high I stood in his good graces. He it was who with four other reprobates conveyed the Russian copper boiler from my wharf one evening, under the very noses of two sentries, and broke it up and sold it before morning; but it caused no fracture in our friendship. Nothing could be more simple; they were thirsty, and had not the wherewithal, so—"to your health, Monsieur le Capitaine Godam."

Jean had been offered his epaulette times out of record, but was far too wise to accept it. As Jean Taureau, the smasher of brutes, he was a distinct entity; he was pointed at with the finger;



the whole regiment felt proud of him ; but, had he once become an officer, he would be a non-entity. Besides, Jean loved his ease, and liked to sit gossiping to the *vivandière* all day, nursing the baby and drinking glass after glass of *absinthe*, and this was legitimate so long as he wore the stripes, but the lace would have formed an insurmountable barrier. He would have to dress cleanly, and nothing annoyed Jean so much. Hence he remained Jean Taureau, very jolly, and ready to drink a glass at your expense, or pay for one for you, it was no matter which, so long as he had an excuse for drinking.

It was at Kertch that he attained the pinnacle of his renown. It was not by breaking up all the drains to find the money the Russians had hidden there, but by becoming captive to the sword and bow of the Cossacks. In catching him the Tartars truly caught a fellow-countryman.

It came about in this wise : not having anything to do, the Hussars and Chasseurs went out one foggy, drizzly day to reconnoitre. Somebody had heard somebody say there were Cossacks in the neighbourhood, and that was enough to cause an *alerte*. Well, on reaching a Kourgan, or one of those huge tumuli which dot the country round

like miniature Vesuvii (I presume that is a coinable word?), the two troops parted, after agreeing to ride round it and meet on the other side. The English got round first, and seeing their friends, as they supposed, a short distance ahead of them, they cantered up to them, and, to their passable surprise, found themselves hand to hand with a *pulk* of Cossacks.

They fought well and savagely, but the odds were against them. The Cossacks seemed to grow out of the ground; and even when the Chasseurs d'Afrique came to the rescue, they could only succeed in retiring together in good order, leaving several prisoners behind them. Among the latter was Jean Taureau, who was last seen on foot, in the centre of a circle of enraged Cossacks, remorselessly smashing the noses of both men and horses with his sledge-hammer fists. A pistol-shot would have settled him at once, but the Cossacks round Kertch never killed any European. English and French prisoners were such a rarity that Count Woronzoff, Governor of Kaffa, offered five pounds a head for every one brought in alive, but nothing for a dead man. Had the fact been known prior to my departure, probably the insurance offices would not have charged me seven per cent. when I went to the wars.

Six weeks elapsed, during which I lamented the loss of my friend Jean, and at length one afternoon I rode out to the lines at Spanish Farm to dispel my melancholy. While "washing my mouth out" with brandy-and-water at the quarters of the officer in command, I heard a sudden alarm—a clump of Cossack spears was pricking o'er the plain. An officer came in with a flag of truce to propose an exchange of prisoners.

Unfortunately we had not a prisoner to offer, though we would willingly have given the officer the whole Russian population of Kertch. But he was far too wise to accept them, for they served admirably as spies, through the intermediation of the Tatars, who came in with horse-flesh, eggs, and mare's milk. Matters were coming to a standstill, when the Russian officer displayed unexampled generosity: he consented to give up a prisoner gratis. Of course, we were deeply grateful, and he soon came back with twenty Cossacks, and in their centre—could I believe my eyes?—Jean Taureau!

One of the Cossacks slipped the string which bound his arms, and they all timidly fell back. It was for all the world like those Eastern sports, in which a tiger is badgered by being surrounded

by a living hedge of spears, through which he tries in vain to break. Jean shook his fist solemnly at the Cossacks, then walked into the room, and, without saying by your leave or with your leave, applied the brandy bottle to his lips and emptied it.

We invited the Russian officer to share our dinner, such as it was, and over the coffee he grew affable and chatty. I may here mention that he spoke English rather better than myself—in fact, he conversed fluently in every European language, except Russian. He told us then the motives which led to the emancipation of Jean Taureau.

“Imagine that animal, gentlemen. When he was brought in, he had twenty-seven lance stabs, and was taken to hospital. In a week he was about the streets again, quite hearty, and making a frightful disturbance. He would get very drunk on vodki, though he abused it for not being half so good as absinthe; and, when in that state, regularly sent some half dozen Cossacks to hospital. If it had gone on a month, we should not have had men enough to mount guard. Well, we tried fair means with him. The count appointed him his cook at five francs a day—but, bah! that made him twentyfold worse. He drank all the

wine given him for cooking purposes, spent his money in brandy, and massacred Cossacks worse than before. After that, we confined him in a guard-room, and he broke up all the furniture, smashed in the door, and got out; last of all, we locked him up in a cell; but, pooh! he pulled down the bars, dug a hole through the masonry—like your Jack Sheppard—and half-killed a dozen men with his crowbar.

“And so he became a perfect terror to the town; not a soldier would go near him, and the Count Woronzoff asked me to bring him in. I induced him to let me tie his hands this morning, or my men would not have come with him. And here you have him! I wish you joy of him!”

Jean sat listening very cunningly, as if he understood every word, and when the officer had ended, he gave an approving nod, and said:—

“*Mais qu'oui, il dit vrai, sa cré-é-é-é Godam Russe!*”

Towards nightfall we entered quietly into Kertch, Mr. Bull, telling me along the road pleasing little anecdotes of home-life in Russia—such as he had noticed it during his six weeks' stay at Kaffa. But our pleasing intercourse was fated to be broken up by the signature of peace;

the Chasseurs were ordered back to Algeria, and I never saw Jean Taureau again.

I heard of him, though, last summer in Paris. Like Milo, he had confided too much to his strength, and got worsted. He had left the regiment soon after the peace, and transferred his services to a travelling circus, as the pocket Hercules. His great feat was having a nine-pounder gun laid on his back—as on a gun-carriage—and fired while in that position. One evening he performed before the Emperor, and the distinction killed him. Dazzled by great applause, he insisted on repeating the tremendous feat three times in succession. The pressure grew too great—his hands gave way—and he fell forward on his chest. The spine was crushed. He was removed to a hospital, where he died within a week.

Farewell, old demolisher of bulls and Cossacks—the Chasseurs will never see another like thee. This slight sketch of thy prowess will serve as thy tombstone; for thou hast no other.

## CHAPTER IV.

## WHO KILLED THE CAT?

HAVING in my last chapter given rather a favorable account of a French soldier, I cannot do better than hold up with equal impartiality, the other side of the medal; leaving my readers to draw their own conclusion, from facts I lay before them; as to the real love existing between the English and French armies.

The garrison at Fort Paul was composed of Turkish contingents, and a French regiment of *Infanterie de la Marine*, or, as we should say, Royal Marines, Light Infantry. These men had, like the Chasseurs d'Afrique, been exiled from Sebastopol; but for a very different reason. They had displayed rank cowardice before the Malakoff, and were, therefore, shunted off the field of glory as rapidly as possible.

They certainly possessed in perfection, all the bad qualities of the Frenchman. They were

braggarts, bullies, and prone to impertinence. They were universally disliked; but by none so much as by our jolly Turks. They were under a considerable delusion, I grant. They had seen the Turks shamefully ill-treated, and morally spat upon at Balaclava; but when they fancied they could carry on the same tactics here, they soon found out their mistake. Bono Johnny could hit uncommonly hard. They discovered that bullying was by no means the safe game it used to be up at the front, where a jovial Tar would think nothing of riding a quarter score miles on the back of a Turk.

We had, in and about Kertch, some sixteen thousand Turkish soldiers, as a body, the finest and most muscular soldiers in the world. We were a handful of English to command them, and had a most delicate course to steer in overcoming their susceptibilities. There were moments, when our lives were not worth a minute's purchase, and this was the time when these dirty little French vagabonds chose to annoy our men in every possible way.

It was a long time, however, before the Turks at Fort Paul could realise the fact that these atomies intended insult—it was the story of the



mastiff and the pug; and, even when they recognised a malice-prepense, they were a long while before they could be roused to action; I fancy, they thought, like the Irishman, who was abused for letting his wife beat him—he did'nt feel it, and bless her, if it afforded her pleasure, why should he interfere? At length, though matters went beyond a joke, and the regiment of French Infantry of the Marine, was within an ace of having the number of its mess rubbed out. In this way.

The Turks at Fort Paul lived under canvas, a bell tent being served out to every twenty men: It was a most comical sight to see them lying there, with their feet to the pole, looking like so many spokes in a gigantic wheel, every man smoking, but not uttering a word in an hour. They call this *keff*—it is their beatitude. Well, I do not begrudge it to them! One would think, that such a number of men, each maintaining his private menagerie, would be tolerably crowded in a tent, as tightly as herrings in a barrel; but no, owing to the Turk's intense affection for domestic playthings, every tent had its cat attached to it. Fine, tall, silky-haired fellows, haughty as drum-majors, and sleek as a Father Confessor. They

were in clover, the rascals, and they knew it; they had no need to take to mousing, so long as they had a ration of pillau served out to them daily. So they waxed fat and kicked.

When spring came, the gardens the Frenchmen had so carefully formed on the barren chalk began to grow green, and the sprouting vegetables naturally suggested gushing thoughts of a "*civet au lapin*" as a variety. Now, it is a notorious fact, that cat's and horseflesh are the two great staples of the Parisian cheap eating-houses, and so some Marine, who had probably been apprenticed to the profession, turned his eyes on the Turk's favourites. We all remember the discovery of roast pork, and the alarming quantities of fire it occasioned. Well, no sooner had one cat disappeared, than there seemed to be an epidemic among them. The Turks in vain sought their favorites, and would not be comforted because they were not. And yet more and more cats disappeared, and the Frenchmen began to grow plump and saucy.

At length, by slow degrees, light dawned on the besmoked brains of the Turks. There was an Archimedes among them, who discovered the crucial experiment. A Turk happened to pass a

French Marine (I cannot call him a "jolly," like our men, for he was anything but that) uttered a distinct and long-lasting Mia-a-a-a-au-aw! and the conscience-stricken Gaul lifted up his hand to smite him. But the gigantic Turk only grinned, and repeated the cat-call. The convicted thief slunk away, and soon the whole encampment rung with calls of the same nature. It seemed as if the entire feline population of the world, had assembled at Fort Paul to institute the "Harmony of Nations." At any rate, I am quite certain Mons. Jullien did not make a greater row with his, as set to music by Desmond Ryan, Esq., and obligingly produced in the *Illustrated News*.

The Gallic blood was aroused, and they determined to take their revenge in a cowardly way. Each evening at six, deputations from all the regiments used to assemble at the filtering apparatus, to receive their allowance of water for the next day; for, among its other agreeablenesses, as I have incidentally mentioned, Fort Paul had not a single drop of sweet water, and everybody, perforce, had to drink that sickly, mawkish stuff, produced by the condensing machine.

No wonder that a gallant officer built close to his hut a solid wall of empty bottles, eight feet

every way; which he nobly boasted, had every one been emptied in his own quarters, (I should not like this fact to go further, for censorious people might fancy the Contingent indulged in habits of intoxication.) Well, the French scoundrels way-laid our Turks as they were groaning up the hill, under the pail yoke; and made a most brutal and cowardly attack upon them with sticks and sword-belts. They were something like five to one, and the Turks were frightfully mauled.

It was of no use complaining to the French fort commandant, so the English officers took the law into their own hands. A conference was held with the Bimbashis; and it was arranged that the French should receive as pretty a thrashing in return as they could endure. And, let me tell you, when a Turk does hit, there is no mistake about it—it is like the kick of a horse. Well, at watering time, the French, who had some suspicion that reprisals were intended, assembled in large numbers, and a body of Turks marched down to the battle-field. They very soon came into collision, and, for about ten minutes, there was as pretty a game of “Wigs on the green,” as was ever seen at Donnybrook Fair. But the puny Frenchman were as children in the hands of their powerful

assailants; they broke and fled, excepting some thirty, who found it convenient to remain on the ground.

So far all was well; the French had been defeated at their own game, and all should have remained "as you were"; but the French commandant ordered the *rappel* to be beaten, and soon marched down with half a battalion under arms. This rendered matters at once serious; the Turks, alive to their danger, silently fell in, their English officers took their places, and there was a very awkward pause.

I am afraid that some among us would not have broken our hearts had it come to blows; for there was no love lost between ourselves and the Marines; but, of course, this was to be prevented at any price. Unfortunately, at the decisive moment, a very fierce altercation broke out between the English and French town commandant, and the matter thus at once became personal. The troops gradually retired from the scene, and the French officer sent in a report to head-quarters of the gross way in which he had been insulted. He certainly had cause of complaint—forty of his men rendered *hors de combat*, scores of others with aching bones, and hardly a Turk disabled; but I

think he need not have made such a disturbance. When, though, was a Frenchman ever manly enough to own himself wrong.

The result was very unhappy for our countryman, for he was dismissed the service without appeal, owing to that wretched system of conciliation, which accompanied us throughout the Crimean war, and which caused the French to form such an exaggerated notion of their own importance. I firmly believe that the impertinences French officers are periodically guilty of towards this country, have their origin in the deference we showed them in the Crimea; and they have at length ascribed to fear, what was only the result of a haughty feeling of superiority.

There was one benefit, however, derivable from the "coroborry." The Marines were shipped off within a fortnight, the Turks lining the heights to see them depart, and saluting them with an universal *Miauw*! The worst consequence of the affair was, that the ill-feeling rapidly spread to Kertch, and the Chasseurs and Turks soon came to loggerheads, for the sons of Mohammed, once conscious of their power, would no longer meekly endure cuffs and blows.

I never shall forget Jean Taureau's look of stolid

amazement one day in the market-place, when a Turk, whose beard he had affectionately pulled, turned and struck him in the face. For one moment Jean stood and looked at him, then seizing the luckless Paynim by the collar and waistband, he hurled him into a tub of sticky goat's-cheese. His comrades collected round him like wasps round a sugar-cask, and were soon greedily engaged in licking him clean. I dare say they wished such an accident would occur every day.

Jesting apart, though, it was a very critical moment for all of us; for, had the Turks once tasted European blood, I do not think one of us would have lived to tell the tale. When once roused, these fellows run-a-muck as savagely as the fiercest Malay. Fortunately the French commandant at Kertch, was a very different man from his testy colleague at Fort Paul; he consigned his men to quarters, or took them for long expeditions into the country in search of forage. The irritating cause being thus removed, our men soon returned to their former listlessness.

Still, we had a very narrow squeak for it; and I am afraid, hated the French with the greatest intensity, owing to the alarm they had caused us. The lesson, I hope, did them good; but French

soldiers have much of the Bourbon in them—they learn nothing, and forget nothing. They are, at the same time, so domineering, that it is most unpleasant to be quartered with them; and I do not envy our fellows, who form part of the joint expedition to China.

Were the French Nation enlightened as to the real nature of the Crimean War, there would, in all probability, be no cause for the continued excitement between the two great nations. Were they taught what marvels our men achieved, they would respect us. But just see, how history is written for them; *they* won at the Alma, *they* defeated the Russians at Inkermann; *they* took the Malakoff; while we were repulsed at the Redan. But they know little, how we fought up that dreadful hill at Alma; or the fierce contest our Guards sustained at Inkerman; they are taught to believe that the French troops did everything; and would have ended the campaign much sooner, had the English been out of the way.

That there is some truth in this, I grant, and had Lord Raglan lived, and Canrobert remained at the head of the French army, the divided counsels might have kept us to this day before



Sebastopol. But, when Pelissier assumed the undivided command, matters went on better; we had borne the burthen and heat of the day, and the French were to reap the harvest.

And so it will be, in every great expedition in which we are engaged. Fortunately, Louis Napoleon cannot work the Chinese Campaign by telegraph from the Tuileries; but I foresee much heart-burning. Why, the French claim the first capture of Canton with their handful of Marines—what will it be now, with a well-disciplined *Corps d' Armée*?

I leave out of sight the danger which menaces our Oriental possessions, by the gradual concentration of French Troops in the Indian waters: for I do not wish to be taken for an alarmist. So let me get back to Kertch, and my rambling narrative, ere I grow heavy, and my reader give way to a fatal yawn.

## CHAP. XV.

## CAPTAIN MARTINITZ.

**I**N one of my previous chapters, I have mentioned, I think, that, although we might at times run short of food at Kertch, there never was any deficiency of spies. Instead of coming single, they were in battalions, and I firmly believe that General Wrangel, at Kaffa, knew more of what was going on in the town, than half the British officers. We had a force of mounted Tatar Militia in our pay, and they did a good deal of the spying; but Russian officers would also come in, disguised as peasants, and examine into our resources. That our defensive preparations were not bad, in spite of the abuse lavished on us in England, is tolerably proved by the fact, that the Russians, with all their intimate knowledge of our movements, never ventured to attack our position.

It was very rare that we came on a spy, for

their number precluded it; but there was one gentleman on whom we all vowed vengeance. His name was perfectly well known as Captain Martinitz, for he had most politely received the flag of truce sent out to recover Captain Sherwood's body. The poor lad was killed in the lamentable affair of Spanish Farm, when Major M'Donald managed to cut his way through a force of three hundred Cossacks, saving forty-five men, but leaving forty others, with young Sherwood, on the field.

How severe the fight must have been is proved by the fact, that Major M'Donald, on coming back, was found to have twenty-seven lance-stabs in his fur coat and belts. But the Russians behaved most nobly to Sherwood: when our fellows got out, they found that he had been buried with all military honours; and all they could do was to thank Martinitz, and part with mutual good wishes, after availing themselves of the Russian hospitality.

Thus Martinitz became known to several of us; and even the others who had not formed an acquaintance with him, grew into a habit of liking him, for the officers who had met him never tired of describing his courtesy. It, there-

fore, produced a feeling of most painful surprise through Kertch, when the rumour spread that he had been seen more than once among the Tatars in our market-place, and there could be no doubt that he was a spy.

Now, no one likes to have a man shot, whom he has learned to respect; and we pooh-poohed the idea very nobly. But it was too true: my old friend Jean Taureau, of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, who had been a prisoner for more than a month at Kaffa, and knew Martinitz intimately by sight, had first detected his presence, and made it known to the authorities. A careful watch was instituted; but nobody in any way resembling Martinitz was found, and people began laughing at Jean Taureau, who was assumed to have drunk more deeply than was his wont of *absinthe*.

The laughter grew quite uproarious, when the French John Bull appeared before his commanding officer one morning with only the hilt of his sabre in his hand, and declared he had broken the blade in striking at "Monsieur le Capitaine," as he disappeared through a door-way near the Upper Church. But the *Chef de Bataillon* merely shrugged his shoulders, and hinted something about a wooden horse, which made Jean Taureau

turn pale with fury. He marched straight out of the Commandant's quarters; but so soon as the door was safely closed behind him, he began a rolling fire of "*Crés nom d'une pipe!*" which lasted him all the way to the French canteen in the new market-place, where he sat hugging a bottle of *absinthe* till he had squeezed the very life out of it.

Jean Taureau, it is true, detested the Russians, as we always hate those against whom we are fighting; but he hated them still worse, when they afforded opportunity for *him*, Jean Taureau, the Matador of the Chasseurs d'Afrique, to be ridiculed by his comrades. Try all he knew, Jean Taureau could not induce anybody to be convinced of the individuality of this Captain Martinitz, and he swore a bitter oath that he would shame the fools; let him but make the Captain captive of his sword and bow, and then, ha, ha! it would be his turn to grin vindictively.

When a Frenchman has once set his "back up," no power on earth can keep him in order. Jean immediately made up his mind to hunt the Captain down; and, in doing so, cared not what happened to himself for absence without leave. But Jean was a privileged individual; he could

go about just as he pleased ; for it was known that he had refused his commission times out of mind, and wore the worsted *galons*, because he preferred to be *primus inter pares*. Hence, no one split, because he stopped away after the tattoo had been beaten, and only returned to his quarters in time for parade.

All this while, I need not say, he was closely watching the house into which he had seen Martinitz disappear. But his brow grew darker and darker, as his prospects of catching the spy grew less and less. For a fortnight he had remained in the street from nightfall to dawn ; and yet his enemy had not once appeared. Had he been in the full possession of his senses, Jean would have come to the conclusion that Martinitz had never left the house, since Jean's sabre had crashed so ominously close to his head ; but revenge, like love, is proverbially blind.

At length, just as the third week set in, Jean was struck with a sudden inspiration : during his night's watch he noticed a Russian, wrapped in the inevitable, but ever nasty sheepskin, dodging about the street, and evidently waiting for somebody. Jean retired into a gateway, in order to watch the Moscov, and was amply rewarded when

he saw him making stealthy signals to the suspected house. A window was noiselessly opened : certain signs passed, and the window closed again.

The moment had arrived : as the unsuspecting Russian passed the archway, Jean sprang on him, and with his tremendous hands choked the breath out of his body. The poor fellow sank apparently lifeless to the ground, and Jean stripped him of his coat and tall fur cap, which he donned, not without turning up his nose with great indignation. Then, he hastily gagged the prostrate Russian, and waited the course of events.

He was not mistaken in his calculations : he had scarcely emerged into the narrow street, ere the window was again opened, and the signals were repeated, which Jean replied to with consummate audacity, imitating, as well as he could, the movements of his peasant prisoner. The trick was perfectly successful, for, within five minutes, a door creaked and a figure emerged, dressed in the Tatar garb. Jean held his breath ; his doubts were about to be solved,—the stranger made imperious signs to him to advance, which he obeyed, and within a minute he found himself face to face with Captain Martinitz.

"*Enfin !*" Jean growled between his set teeth.

The Captain, startled by the French ejaculation, thrust his hand into his breast, but it was too late. Jean had sprung on him like a tiger robbed of its young. Martinitz tried in vain to struggle—the pressure gradually tightened round his throat—he could scarcely breathe—with a faint groan he sank to the earth, and all was a blank.

\* \* \* \*

When he opened his eyes again, he found himself lying in a strange room, carefully wrapped up. He sprang from his bed, and tried the door; that was securely fastened. In a corner near his bed was the British ensign, as if in mockery, while certain articles, lying about the room, indicated that he was in the hands of the Philistines. Martinitz, as a sensible man, went back to bed.

I have no doubt, my readers, though not excited by any inordinate curiosity, desire to know where the Captain was at this moment; and I am delighted to oblige them. While Jean Taureau lay on the top of his victim, speculating as to how he should dispose of him, a Turkish picquet noiselessly came up the street and disturbed him. I need not say how furious he was: he surveyed



the men as if measuring his strength; but, though he could overcome anything human, he could not withstand a dozen Minié balls. So shaking his fist at the Chaous, he walked off.

While all this was going on, the Russian had recovered his senses, and at length removed his bonds. He carefully followed the Turks, and breathed a profound sigh of relief when he saw that they delivered their prisoner over to the safe custody of the Provost Guard.

Billy Hatch, the Provost Sergeant, was a very curious, though a very good, fellow. He had been for a long time a warrant officer, on board one of Her Majesty's vessels, and had been appointed to the Contingent by some of that favouritism which got myself a commission, "if I dare compare small things with great." Being in receipt of some eight shillings a day, which was more than he had ever dreamed of, Billy was essentially loyal, and could only find an outlet for his loyalty by hoisting the British ensign on every possible occasion, the royal birth-days happily affording him pretty constant opportunities.

Billy, however, in spite of his loyalty, had a fault; he was violently affected by the Kertch fever, or, in other words, an undue liking for

ardent liquors; and on the night when Captain Martinitz was handed over to him by the Turks, he was in the last stage of loyalty. Hence, he was only too proud to offer his prisoner his own bed-room, where floated the British ensign, "on which," he sententiously observed, "the sun never goes down. God bless Victoria!" and that sentiment he washed down with an extra glass of rum.

For all that, and the unlimited offers of liquor, Captain Martinitz felt unhappy. He knew that, by the code of his own army, he was guilty of a crime punishable with death; and that although the English might not be so severe, he had degraded himself in our eyes. Billy Hatch's bed was comfortable enough, that he granted; but his next bed might be much narrower and much damper. Altogether, I cannot assert that Captain Martinitz was comfortable.

He was just dropping off to sleep, however—for the greatest criminals snooze most heartily just before execution (*vide* the "Newgate Calendar," *passim*)—when his attention was aroused by the sound of something gnawing at the boards. "A rat for a ducat!" he thought to himself; but it struck him, for all that, as marvellously

like a file. His doubts were dispelled when a sudden flash of light burst into the room, and a concealed door was thrown open, through which his faithful Mujik crawled. On his tip-toes he advanced to the bed, and seized Martinitz by the arm.

"Come," he said, "the time has arrived, *Gospodi pomihu*. I knew the people next door, and have thus been able to save you."

The Captain's eyes twinkled with hardly suppressed triumph.

"Wait a minute," he said, "I must have this haughty banner and astounding helmet. They will excite a sensation at Kaffa, and we have sadly wanted that for a long time."

And the rascal actually had the impudence to carry off poor Billy Hatch's flag of triumph, which he stowed away in the skirt of his ample trousers.

You can imagine the excitement, when it was discovered next morning that Captain Martinitz had disappeared, and actually dared to pollute the British flag! Jean Taureau accused Billy of perfidy, and challenged him on the spot; but, as the latter insisted on fighting with ship's carbines, Jean called him a *barbare*, and moodily quitted the house.

Not long after, the armistice was arranged, and almost the first person to visit Kertch was Captain Martinitz. We lived aloof from him for a while ; but he disarmed us by producing his wife, for whose sake, he declared on his honour, he had alone paid clandestine visits to the town. She was so lovely that we could not blame him even risking his neck for her sake ; and all my wonder was that she had not been found out before. But she had been kept safely immured in a cellar, the entrance to which was only known to his Russian friend.

Some light-minded men, perhaps, regretted that they had not taken Jean Taureau's advice, and thoroughly searched the house ; but I am glad that Martinitz was no spy after all. Love impelled him to visit the town, and I should like to know who ought to blame him. At any rate, the Russians are happily ignorant of Sir Creswell Creswell.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## LIFE IN THE HOSPITALS.

**I**T is generally allowed, that among the many weak points connected with Turkish administration, the weakest is the management of medical affairs. Up to the period of Mahmud II., the study of anatomy was strictly forbidden; but that iron-nerved potentate, perhaps, thinking it a pity to throw away the promising "subjects" supplied by the janissary slaughter, opened a school for anatomy, to which all the medical students were driven. But there is an old saying about "taking a horse to water," and the obstinate Turks would not drink from the well of learning offered them. It required years before the Turkish physicians acquired even a rudimentary knowledge of anatomy; and even now, I should be very sorry to call one of them in to cure me.

The Hungarian Revolution flooded Turkey with adventurers, who, in the hope of gaining an honest

livelihood, dubbed themselves physicians, and were appointed to the regiments. Very few of these men had completed their studies; and they made experiments in *corpore vili* of the luckless Turks. During the Kalafat campaign, no less than ten thousand men died in the hospitals. How this came about, I can explain by a conversation I had with two young Hekim Bashis, whose acquaintance I had the honour of making at Pera. One of them told me his life-history in so cool a manner, that it deserves preservation. During the Hungarian Revolution, he became a Lieutenant of Hussars, at the ripe age of eighteen. Of course, he proceeded to Turkey when all was over, and was soon on the highest road to starvation. At length his friends asked him, if he thought he could manage to write himself a Latin diploma. He rubbed up his classical knowledge, and within a week the valuable document was completed. It was laid before the Inspector of Hospitals; and the young lieutenant was, on the strength of it, appointed regimental apothecary, with the promise of promotion to surgeon on the first vacancy. He confessed to me, that his whole stock of medical knowledge was derived from a book of recipes; and that his principle was to

employ purgatives in all cases. When I mildly hinted that it was murder made easy, he remarked, that his colleagues knew no more than he did ; and that if he resigned his appointment, there were hundreds ready to take it, who knew less than himself. Indeed, he prided himself on the fact, that the mortality in his hospital was five per cent. lower than in the others, where it averaged at least thirty per cent. !

The English authorities, to whom the formation of the Contingent was intrusted, being probably acquainted with these facts, paid great attention to the Medical department, and we were provided with a most efficient corps. I consider that the presence of these gentlemen was the most powerful lever we possessed to gain the good-will of the troops ; and if a Turk could be grateful, our men should have worshipped their doctors. One thing they learned in the hospitals, was to indulge very considerably in whiskey, which was ordered them as an anti-scorbutic, and they swallowed it exactly like Christians. Curiously enough, when a Turk takes to drinking (and the evil is spreading far more than is suspected), he always has recourse to the most powerful spirit, and never thinks of mixing water with it, if he can help it. As for wine, he

regards it with the most lordly contempt, though the Sultan, I believe, goes in extensively for champagne.

I was witness of some curious scenes in the hospitals; and the death-bed of many of the men offered anything but an edifying lesson. When a man was given over, his comrades would come and sit by his side, generally singing the most improper songs, at which the dying man would conjure up the ghost of a smile. But I never saw a Turk funk death: he would lie quietly waiting the summons, and go off without a change of feature. There was something, though, rather repulsive in the way the living men treated him. On one occasion, I saw a sergeant and a corporal coolly betting. The former asserted that, in dying, the man would snap for breath three times; the latter, that he would do so four. Of course they backed their opinions to the extent of five paras, and most intense was their disgust when the dying man sold them by only snapping twice.

The native *jerrahs*, or apothecaries, were reduced to the rank of barbers, although the full-blood Turks would now and then call them in, through prejudice against the Giaours. One of them, belonging to the Horse Artillery, had the



reputation of being a magician and Shaitan-subduer; and he drank oceans of rum, supplied by his credulous fellow-soldiers, to keep his strength up, for the evil one generally made a hard fight of it. I was present on one occasion when a Tatar brought in his boy, who was suffering from a spinal complaint, to be exorcised by the *jerrah*. The entire battery assembled to watch the operation, which was simple enough. The thaumaturge laid the boy down on his stomach in the yard, and after going through some magic ceremonies, he knelt down on him, and pounded him all over. Then, he put his mouth to the boy's ear, and gave a huge gulp—he had swallowed the Shaitan. He rose, quite exhausted, and his admiring countrymen soon clubbed the money to buy him a bottle of *rakih*, which he swallowed with great satisfaction. Curiously enough, though, the boy got up perfectly straight, and declared that he was quite recovered. He honestly believed it, at any rate; and it would have been cruelty of us to try and deceive him.

In addition to the excellent staff of medical officers, the Purveyor's department was in first-rate condition, owing to the great care Mr. Dunnaway, the officer in charge, devoted to his difficult

duties. Difficult, I say advisedly, for the genius of red-tape is more rampant in our medical department than any other. Such a complicated system of indents and vouchers is simply ridiculous; but it is found in every part of the army. I remember once sending an order to the Engineer's office for a stove, and having it returned to me, because it was not under an envelope! The enemy were within ten miles, but military etiquette must be maintained. A lucky fire at Balaclava abolished this to a great extent in the regular army, by destroying chests full of vouchers and documents; but we had no such safety-valve. The books, etc., belonging to our department alone occupied twenty boxes; and I had registered a solemn vow, that, if ever we entered the field, they should fall a prey to the Russians. If they could have been inoculated with the system, it would have benefited us as much as an auxiliary corps of 10,000 men.

As we drew all our supplies from Sebastopol, it gradually became the fashion for the departments there, to shunt over to us all the stores which they found troublesome; and so far was this carried, that, up to the last fortnight of our occupation of Kertch, stores came up. No one liked to

undertake any responsibility, for the departments make their officers personally responsible for any deficit. Now, in dealing with the Turks, it was utterly impossible to prevent them stealing; and finally, vouchers would be forgotten. When the accounts were overhauled in England, however, after the war, by an army of clerks; all these omissions were brought up in judgment, and most unfairly, I think. All the public departments seem to think that their officers are constantly employed in attempts to rob them; and such a system of check and counter-check is established, that the confusion only becomes worse confounded. Let us take an instance.

An officer commanding a regiment, required, say, a dozen muzzle-stoppers, worth at the most two shillings. In the first place, he made out an indent on the Adjutant General, who counter-signed it. With this order, he would come to my office and ask for the articles. But, before I could supply them, I had to make out two receipts, on half sheets of foolscap, which he signed. To one of these, the original order was attached; and a duplicate to the other. The former wandered off to England, with a score others as trumpery, once a month; the latter I kept as my security.

After this, the issue had to be posted up in a huge book. I will not allude here to the continuous reports which had to be made out, and transmitted home; but, I only wish a Committee on the subject were moved for, and myself called as a witness. I think I could open the eyes of our legislators.

But with all these pitfalls, or perhaps, in spite of them, our medical department did their manly *devoir*. The hospitals were kept beautifully clean, by constant supervision, for the Turks will do nothing till they are driven, and it is curious, that though constantly washing themselves, they are so fearfully dirty. I remember my boy coming in from camp one day all amazement. "If you please, Sir," he said to me most naively. "I seed a Turk a washing his shirt,"—I can hardly believe that he was a Turk.

They had plenty of work though, our Medicos; for, owing to the constant eating of rice, the Turks were affected by scurvy to an eminent degree; and the number of patients at one time was very alarming. The large quarantine buildings were, however, soon converted into a lazaretto, the "William" transport, made a floating hospital; and by the help of lime-juice, oranges, and compressed vegetables and when, last but not least, fresh mutton

was substituted for salt beef, our men speedily recovered their health and spirits.

I think the Turks shine most in illness, there is such a beautiful, unrepining way about them ; and they never flurry themselves. If it be the will of Allah, they will rise from their sick bed again—if not——. They swallow the most nauseous medicines without even a wry face ; though I fancy they have a preference for spirituous drinks. Indeed, more than one would sham sick, for the sake of going into hospital, and getting a dose of “ Ouiski ” ; but our doctors were down on them before long, and cured them in so unpleasant a fashion, that they very soon returned to their duty.

Strangely enough, with all their religious enthusiasm, the Turks perform their funerals with but scant ceremony. Considering that they regard death as a preparation for a paradise peopled with houris, they take it very coolly. But I fancy that the Turks do not believe so strongly as they used in the efficacy of their religion ; and are growing very materialist in their views. At any rate, the dead are shoved into the ground ; a few spadefull of earth thrown over them ; and they are left to the polite attention of the masterless dogs, and the jackals.

Whether we have effected any improvement in the Turkish army, by the example we set, I cannot say ; but I doubt it. The medicine chests, etc., we gave the regiments, were, of course confiscated so soon as we had turned our backs, and sold by the greedy Pachas, who would make money of their own mothers ; and, if anybody dared to grumble, his heels answered for his head. There never will be any hope of reform in Turkey, so long as the Pachas hold the sway. They supply the Sultan with money for his extravagance, and are allowed to act as they please, till some other dignitary outbids them. Then, they are sent into exile, or given some distant Pachalik, where they revel in their plunder. All the reforms periodically announced in Turkey, then, are a delusion, so long as they do not begin at the head.

Poor fellows ! No wonder the Turks die with such resignation ; for life is hardly worth having, when spent in toiling to satisfy the luxury of others, and “ eating stick ” as daily dinner.

## CHAP. XVII.

## OUR RACES—THE RAMADAN.

ONE of the curiosities of the Crimean war, to my mind, was the way in which the troops amused themselves, and forgot their cares for a season. The Zouaves fitted up a magnificent theatre, in which they performed the most comic interludes, which formed a ghastly contrast to the grim tragedy hourly enacted at the front. So eager were they in the pursuit of scenic amusement, that even the horrors of the 8th of June did not close the doors. In the morning, the Zouaves "took the Russians off" by the bullet; in the evening, they took them off again by ridiculous caricatures.

Our men, on the other hand, true to their natural instincts, found their only relaxation in horse-racing; and the frequency of these sports in a measure converted "our own correspondents" into Vates and Pegasuses. After the race for the

Redan had been graphically described, followed, naturally enough, that other race for the cup or purse, which created greater excitement than the every-day occurrences of warfare. A Russian fort might be stormed at any moment, but a hurdle-race was an event out of the common.

It is not surprising, then, that we of the Contingent followed the example set us by our colleagues at Sebastopol and Shumla. Our races were programmed, and a considerable sum soon collected. But only one race excited any special interest; an open handicap for the whole force. Of course, the betting was all in favour of the Hussars; for they had many fine horses among them, and it was not thought possible that any Contingent horse could compete with them.

Now, it happened that an assistant-surgeon, stationed at Fort Paul, possessed an old grey mare, which was christened Rosinante, owing to her spectral appearance. On coming out of the stable, she looked most woe-be-gone; for she had only three legs to use, and limped along as if suffering preternaturally from corns. Rosinante's owner, however, understanding something of racing matters and animals, had made the discovery that his mare, when warmed to her work,



possessed an extraordinary speed ; and he accordingly entered her for the all-aged stakes, after certain trials, to which only his intimate friends were invited. She was, however, hardly mentioned in the betting ; and no one gave her a thought, as the race seemed as good as won by the Hussars.

Fortune certainly favored those gentlemen during the day ; every race in which their horses were entered was gained by them, until the all-important handicap arrived. Rumours had of course oozed out about the Fort Paul mare, but when she appeared on the course with only three legs, everybody thought it was a hoax ; and the mare was generally ridiculed. As Englishmen are always ready to support their opinions by trial of wager ; the odds against her varied from twenty to thirty to one ; and, as many of the Contingents were in the secret, the Hussars soon had a pot of money on, almost unconsciously.

The race was twice round and a distance, and during the first round, Rosinante hobbled along so far behind the other horses, that an adventurous cornet offered a hundred to one against her, which was eagerly snapped up. Hardly was the bet booked, than Rosinante seemed to be aware of it ;

for she began throwing her long legs out in a surprising manner, and somehow had gained the use of all four. She went a-head of all the horses, and soon found herself striding side by side of the favourite. Matters grew very exciting, but soon came to a crisis: Rosinante positively seemed to grow to twice her ordinary length, and came in some five yards a-head.

What shouts rent the air! The Hussars were regularly holed, and the Contingents crowed over their victory. I cannot repeat the sum which they were rumoured to have won; but I know it was something enormous. Besides, it is of but little consequence; for they lost it all back again within a fortnight. Rosinante's owner, flushed with her success, matched her against a Hussar horse of great speed, and she was lamentably defeated. Perhaps, she thought she had done enough on the day of her victory. When we left Kertch finally, she was sold to a Tatar for twenty-five shillings.

The most amusing race of the day was certainly that for the Turkish officers. It was a hurdle-race, and I do not believe that any one of the riders had ever taken a fence in his life. It was great fun to see the stout portly Bimbashis

craning over a hurdle, and coming down with a heavy thud, kicking their legs about spasmodically in the air; but they were full of pluck, and soon mounted again—to have another trial. More than half of them never got over the first hurdle; but they went on trying at it long after the race was decided. They had plenty of time for this, as the winner occupied three quarters of an hour in leaping six hurdles. How he must have ached when he went to bed that night!

The proceedings were diversified by foot-races, both for Europeans and Turks; and by the performance of the Pasha's band, which was a true purgatory for even my unmusical ear. I have heard it rumoured, that the Turks possess a tune called the "Turkish Marseillaise," composed by no less a person than Band-Master Donizetti, brother of the great operatic writer; but, if so, I was never fortunate enough to hear it. The only tune our band played was the "God save the Padishah!" and I sincerely pitied our Pasha, for he was compelled to hear this lugubrious stave every Sunday for an hour. I fancy that when civilization discards brazen instruments of melody, they are shipped to Turkey, in the same way as our old coaches. At Top-khaneh, I saw a magnificent "Niggaw"

smiting the cymbals, whom I could almost swear I remembered attached to the Guards in my early youth. I wonder whether, when he was abolished here, the government of the day presented him to the Sultan. Other quaint instruments in the Turkish band, are that straight pyramidical staff, hung with bells, producing a strange jingle, like the Chinese melody played at Mr. Albert Smith's entertainment, and popularly known as the "Ching a ring a ring, ting ting"—awfully intertwined serpents, calling to mind the sufferings of Laocöon, and other barbaric convolutions, all designed to produce the loudest possible bray.

At the period when our races came off, the Ramadan was on; and our town offered a curious spectacle at night. The whole Turkish quarter was lighted up; dancing and singing were almost universal; and pistols were discharged with extraordinary recklessness. It used to be my delight to call on a Bimbashi frequently, and watch his mental disturbances; for, be it understood, that, during the Ramadan, the true Turk neither eats, drinks, nor smokes, from sun-rise to sun-set. The agony of mind Mirza Bey underwent during the last half hour of probation, was most ludicrous; half a dozen servants stood in the room, holding

the dinner in readiness, and the *chiboukji* with the pipe all prepared. As the signal-gun fired, Mirza fell on the viands like a wolf; and what a sigh of satisfaction passed his lips, with the first luxurious puff of smoke.

After all, though, Turkish amusements are dreary work at the best: they sit in the coffee houses, smoking and nodding over their *chibouques*, while Greek boys perform lascivious dances; or the odious spectacle of the *karagüz*, or "black eye," is performed on a screen. These sights always most annoyed me with the Turks; for they indicated to me the abyss of their depravity, and that they were worthy descendants of the Gomorrites.

A gentleman who prominently distinguished himself during the Ramadan, was a wandering Dervish, who was said to have come direct from Mecca. I do not know about that; but he was certainly a most awkward-looking customer, with the long-handled battle-axe he carried as a staff. He was the most daring beggar I ever came across. He would walk into my quarters, and insist on piastres; and if I did not satisfy his modest demand, he would stand cursing me for a quarter of an hour, including my progenitors and

posterity for several generations, and connecting their graves with sundry little dogs.

Altogether, I think the great charm of the Ramadan to the true Turk, is the opportunity of falling into that beatific state of "*keff*," compared with which the Italian *dolce far niente* is hard labour. I have often tried to throw myself into this ecstatic state, but always failed, simply from the fact, that I could not leave off thinking. To throw oneself into this condition, is just as difficult as the attempt to send yourself to sleep by counting the white sheep jumping over the style: you get to a hundred and ninety odd, and then, another thought invades your mind, and your labour is all thrown away. Your Turk, though, is great at absence of thought: he goes off quite naturally into the "*keff*" condition, whenever he likes, and that is usually whenever he has nothing to do. I fancy it has considerable affinity with the vaccine "chewing the cud."

I noticed on several occasions, that those Turks whose conduct was the worst, were generally the most religious. The ruffian who thought nothing of cutting off a Russian woman's ears, for the sake of her rings, never once forgot to perform his daily ablutions. Is it not Maxwell who tells us

the same thing of Irish burglars? They had broken into a house, murdered the owner, sacked all the plunder, and at last proceeded to the larder. They were just going to fall to on the roast-beef, when one of them remembered it was Friday, and they were about to commit a deadly sin. The meat was left untouched.

As a general rule, our privates did not pay much attention to the Ramadan. The stronger-minded of them, would prepare the meals as usual, and the weaker vessels underwent a fierce contest between religion and hunger, generally ending, I am sorry to say, in favor of the latter. The only way to punish a Turk effectually, is to deprive him of his meals: you can subdue the most stubborn fellow in that way. And, yet, so great is their self-command, that, when food is not to be procured, they will go for weeks on half-rations, and never murmur. During the magnificent Wallachian campaign, which opened the ball, and in which the defence of Silistria surpassed even that of Kars, the Turks fought, on empty stomachs, for thirty-nine days against the withering fire of six Russian batteries. But, when they do get a chance, they make up for all past priva-

tion—they rank next to the Esquimaux in the quantity of food they can put away without any fear of indigestion.

At Kertch, of course, they had abundance to eat, for, if provisions ran short, the Europeans were the sufferers; the interesting protégés of our Government must not be dissatisfied on any account. The consequence was, that they grew atrociously fat and lazy, and would not work; unless bribed by extra rations of tobacco. The nuisance was, that it was no use getting in a passion with them, for they laughed incessantly: they considered a box on the ears the best joke in the world, and looked upon it in the light of a compliment; but they never sulked. When they fancied they had done a day's work, they struck, and left everything at sixes and sevens, and with mad shouts of "*paidos, paidos,*" hurried off to their quarters, indulging in a game of leap-frog, as they went on rolling down the hill-side in sheer exuberance of spirits.

During the Ramadan, they had a glorious time of it. Their duties were rendered as light as possible, and beyond guard-mountings, they had nothing to do. They sat along dead walls, in the bright sunshine, enjoying their "*Keff;*"



and so soon as the dinner hour arrived, waddled to their quarters. At night, they had their dances, and their smoke ; and I honestly confess when I saw them so indulged, I wished more than once that I was a Turk, or that we had a Ramadan.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE LAND TRANSPORT.

**B**EFORE I take my leave of Kertch for ever, I think it right to devote one chapter to a very peculiar organization ; which was a product of the war, and was shelved again with its cessation—a step which we may yet have cause to regret ; I allude to the Land Transport Corps, which is now represented by the military train.

When we entered on the last war, there is no doubt that our military system was at its lowest ebb. Although we had hardly ever ceased from fighting since Waterloo, our wars were localized, and the commanders made temporary arrangements to supply the wants of their troops. Hence, when we prepared to fight an European foe, everything had to be re-arranged ; while the French, who had wisely maintained their departments on a peace establishment, needed only to give them the necessary expansion.

As for land transport, the system was almost forgotten in England—we had such a corps in the Peninsula, but it was broken up. Our Commissariat, too, was in a woful condition: the officers were scattered over the world, and when the Chief Commissary was called upon to supply the wants of a large European army, he had no resources at hand. His officers had to gain experience in the field; and any one who wishes to know the result, is directed to Mr. Filder's exhaustive report on the subject. But, even if the Commissariat had been in a perfect state, the want of transport would have been fatal. We landed in the Crimea with scarce forty transport horses and mules; and while our men were performing prodigies of valor, they were left to starve by that odious system, which resulted from a long European peace.

The want of the necessary preparations may be fairly estimated at 5,000 men expended, and the worst of it was, no one seemed to know how to repair the deficiency. The authorities sent in every direction to buy up horses and mules; but the Commissariat had no staff to look after them. At this decisive moment, Colonel M'Murdo hit on the scheme which proved the salvation of our army. The Land Transport Corps was organized

expressly to convey ammunition to the front, and the equally important sinews of war, bread and beef; and though there were numerous hitches at the outset, the system was found to work admirably. And it needed almost superhuman exertions to supply the incessant wants of the Commissary of Ordnance, and the Commissary of Food; but Colonel M'Murdo set himself to work, and was successful.

Taking advantage of the lessons of the past, Major Johnson, who presided over the Contingent Land Transport, at once secured that department an efficiency, rendering it superior to all the others. The organization was most simple: we had four yards—one for horses, one for mules, another for oxen, and the fourth a species of hospital—and I must do the Transport officers the justice of saying, that they were indefatigable. Captain Man rendered the yards a pattern of neatness, and the flooring was most coquettishly inlaid with mosaic designs in paving stones. Not a speck of dirt was to be seen, or the Superintendent suffered.

The corps of drivers was collected from every part of the globe; there was a dark rumour that they had a Chinese among them; but I am con-

vinced every other nation was represented. The uniform consisted of dark brown jackets and knickerbockers; but every man liked to retain some distinct trait of his nationality. The sub-superintendents were nearly all Poles or Circasians, dressed in rifle black; while the British officers wore pearl-grey uniforms.

It was hard work to keep all these ruffians in subordination; and there were one or two who defied all flogging. One man was a curiosity—an enormous jet-black Abyssinian, who every now and then had an insane desire to throttle his non-commissioned officer. When prevented performing this achievement, he would clamber, at the risk of his neck, to the top of some broken wall, where he played a melancholy air on a flageolet. When the paroxysm was over, he came down from his dizzy height, and accepted his dose of stick with the utmost resignation and serenity of mind. And, yet, with all his faults, he paid the utmost attention to his animals, and worked like the nigger he was in his lucid intervals. At last, he was found not to be worth the expense of the whipcord expended on his hide, and was ignominiously discharged, before he had accomplished his design of settling with his sub. He would, doubtlessly,

prove a valuable acquisition to Constantinople ; and I doubt not, has done many a pretty stroke of night-robbery, if the Khavasses have not laid him by the heels, or given him licence to plunder by enrolling him in their ranks.

Another very strange specimen of the transport tribe, was an Albanian, attached to the oxen. He always wore an enormous fustanell, and some fifty yards of muslin, that had once been white, round his turban. The colour of his kilt set off his dirt magnificently ; but his great peculiarity was the armoury of silver-mounted pistols, yataghans, and khandjars he carried in his girdle. When he was hard up, he would offer me these weapons ; but he set such a fancy price upon them, that we could never make a deal. The general result was, that he swindled me out of sundry piastres, which went at once in raki. I fancy he came to grief, too, because he would not keep his yard clean.

A paternal government certainly got its full value out of the Land Transport ; for they were at work from morning to night. They had to supply animals for the Ordnance, the Engineers, and the Commissariat ; and though these departments might squabble among themselves, they

were unanimous in putting the screw on the Land Transport. In no one instance did that corps break down; and I think the officers may look back with pride on the result they achieved. At any rate, that is the only reward they received for their exertions.

Just as the peace was patched up, the land transport had attained to perfection; and it must have been galling to the officers to be compelled to undo their work. If the same regulations were carried out at Sebastopol that took place at Kertch, the sums government lost must have been fearful. It was considered unadvisable to transport the cattle to Stamboul; and orders were, therefore, issued that they should be sold by public auction. Unfortunately, the Tatars were wide-awake enough to discover that we had no intention of removing the animals, and they bought them up at ridiculous prices. Oxen went almost begging at a couple of pounds a team, and the splendid carts were as good as given away. The mules realized tolerably fair prices; but the horses were almost unsaleable.

But this was not all the loss. The contingent officers were directed to hand over their horses, and received as compensation thirty pounds for each

charger. As the horses, on being sold, did not produce a sovereign a piece on the average, the loss can be easily conjectured. But we had promised to evacuate the Crimea by a given date; and, of course, had to keep our word, no matter at what sacrifice.

It was just the same with the huts: many of them had cost government five hundred pounds a piece; but the Russians to whom they were offered, were as acute as the Tatars. They knew we should not remove them, and had no fear of our burning them (as the Turks much desired to treat the town prior to embarkation) and made no bid. At length, they consented to pay five pounds a piece for the huts, and rather plumed themselves on their generosity. I need hardly say that we poor fellows were the sufferers in the long run. Government must save somewhere; and it was easiest to neglect the claims of a party of men who had no influential supporters in the house. The Contingent had been calumniated with such pertinacity that we had not a friend in the world; for if you throw mud enough, some of it is sure to stick. The government made up their minds to follow uncle Toby's advice: they wiped it up and said no more about it.



I should be unjust, if I confined my remarks to the efficiency of the land transport to Kertch. Captain Sargeant at Yenikaleh was equally indefatigable, and his stud of horses was famous, as will be shewn in my sketch of our pic-nic. There was a most friendly spirit of rivalry between the several corps; and I hardly know to which to assign the palm. In fact, all were equally good.

In addition to the organised Land Transport, the Tatars did a considerable trade in conveying. Their favorite animals were camels; and the vehicle attached to two of these unwieldy animals was ludicrously disproportionate to their height. It consisted of a small truck, about the size of a house door, mounted on four wooden solid wheels, which creaked inexorably; and the brutes, if in a good temper, would condescend to advance at the rate of a mile an hour. I saw nothing of their far-famed docility, and had no chance of verifying the statement about the last feather; simply from the fact that the clumsy brutes never put out one tenth part of their strength. But I can say, that they are excessively savage animals; biting and snapping at everything within their reach, and inflicting very serious wounds. It is true, though, that horses stand in terrible dread of them, and

can be forced past them with great difficulty. Once past, however, they are sure to bolt; not from ill-temper, but in sheer anxiety to get as far as possible away.

Nor, are mules the pleasantest beasts of burden in the world; for they are as skittish and full of tricks as kittens. A favorite knack of theirs, is to lie down, and roll over and over, with whatever they have on their backs. On field days, the surgeons used to take the medicine chests out, on the backs of mules, and I hardly remember one, which did not return with considerable damage produced by these amiable eccentricities.

Apart from these hindrances, the way of attaching the articles to the saddle, was fearfully complicated. Long ropes were the great fastening power, and these were swung round and round the boxes, etc., till they were quite secure. If a driver had any one article to carry, he invariably weighted the other side with an enormous lump of stone.

Very funny too, was the way in which planks were transported; though it is a common sight enough in Stamboul. Three are generally fastened on either side the horse, and the ends bound together in front, over the animal's head.

The other ends then trail along the ground. The sight of a procession of animals thus loaded is very amusing; but, if you do not look out, you may get a very awkward blow across the shin. In the narrow streets of Pera, you have no chance, but to fly into the first open doorway; for, as for a Turkish hammal getting out of your way, and making room for you to pass — you might as well expect civility from a London waiter you have neglected to tip; or a railway porter whom you must n't tip.

I have only one more class of beasts of burden to allude to here, the Hospital porters, who were attached to the purveyor's department, and distributed in the several wards as attendants. They formed a considerable body, and were tolerably civil and obliging for Turks.

The other departments had a considerable staff; the Ordnance Field Train, seventy sergeants, conductors, and artificers—the Engineers, 500 Europeans, and the same number of natives—the Commissariat employed a fair number; and the Adjutant and Quartermaster Generals' departments had also a small staff. I have entered into these statistics, to correct an error I have found prevalent among non-military readers, that the

fighting portion of the Army is the only thing to be taken into consideration ; and this was the very idea, which, entertained in higher quarters, led to such lamentable consequences at the opening of the Campaign. I hope it may never surge up again,—but I fear.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## A PIC-NIC PARTY.

THE signature of the Armistice afforded the Contingents an opportunity for surveying the country round Kertch, which was a very pleasant relief, after being cooped up in the dirty, foul-smelling town during the winter. Our rides had hitherto been limited to Fort Paul in one direction, Yeni-Kaléh in the other, and being generally undertaken under the name of "duty," were considered a decided nuisance. So soon, then, as we were insured against a prod from a Cossack lance, the officers spread themselves over the huge plains, or made excursions to the outlying Tatar villages, whence we had drawn the horse-flesh and mare's milk, which were such staple articles in our bill of fare.

The scenery round Kertch was not very striking, I confess; still there was something impressive in the enormous plains from which the

Kourgans, or tumuli, stood out in bold relief, and when riding alone, the tawny ground produced a feeling of desolation.

But this sensation involuntarily yielded to one of regret on noticing all around the very wantonness of destruction that had been committed. In happier times, the country round Kertch had been studded with villas, built with considerable pretensions to taste, and there were several large horticultural establishments, as for instance, one belonging to the Spanish Consul, who had imported three hundred thousand currant bushes; from whose crops he derived a very profitable income. Of course, these disappeared in the general search for firewood; but the wretched Turks, not satisfied with this, had wreaked their vengeance on the gay parterres and flower-beds, and rooted up every green thing.

It aroused a most painful feeling, when you put your horse over a low garden wall, and found yourself in presence of such desolation. Memory irresistibly summoned smiling images of pretty women tending their flowers, and merry-hearted children chasing the butterflies through the trim walks: where were they now? Their home knew them no longer, nor would they have known their

homes, so utterly had the Turks destroyed the buildings, once inhabited by the detested Moscov dogs. Much of this destruction, I grant, was produced by official orders: we were compelled, in self-defence, to build a wall round Kertch, and the square solid stone blocks, of which the houses were built, served our purpose admirably. In fact, when the Russians returned to their property, they found their houses expanded into an eight-foot wall, almost on the spot where they originally stood. Such are the chances of war!

One of the most interesting objects near Kertch was the Botanical Garden, or what remained to evidence its existence. Advantage had been taken of a huge tumulus, round which terraces had been cut, and flowers planted on the slopes; and, judging from the configuration of the grounds, great taste, and large sums must have been expended in laying them out.

During a long day's diligent search, the only living thing I could find was a tuft of *Parma* violets, which I religiously dug up, and put to blow in a marmalade jar. Of course, it was stolen within a fortnight; the mere fact of my setting store on the flowers, made the Turks believe that they possessed some value beyond their intrinsic

beauty. Sentiment was a thing so strange to them, that I did not trouble myself to explain my feelings to Ibrahim Bey, whom I have reasons for believing was the culprit.

My wife's arrival at Kertch served as an excuse for a long meditated pic-nic to the Sea of Azoff. We had been invited to dinner by an officer at Yeni-Kaléh (since killed in India, alas !) and the peculiar elasticity of camp-dinner tables, induced some fifty officers to join our party. Hence, it was determined that we should kill two birds with one stone ; pic-nic and dinner might take place on the same day. The only difficulty was in the mode of transit, for there was not a side-saddle in the place ; but Captain Man, of the Land Transport, gallantly came to the rescue. He supplied an ambulance waggon, to which eight white horses were attached ; rocking-chairs, and camp stools, placed in it ; blankets and fur coats made a famous carpeting, and off we set, a dozen inside the cart, and some forty others on horse-back.

Our march to Yeni-Kaleh presented no features of interest ; we naturally stopped to liquor at the half-way house, the Quarantine station. I rather fancy the young medicos attached to that esta-



blishment must have winced now and then at the incessant calls made on their hospitality. Still, I will do them the credit of saying, that their fountain of rum never ran dry ; and you could not insult them more deeply than by riding past without calling in. An hour after we were winding through the narrow streets of the fortress, and drew rein before the quarters of our dear kind friend, Dr. Wolseley, who, I regret to say, no longer lives to see my printed thanks for his undeviating kindness to me and mine.

Yeni-Kaléh was, and I dare to say is, the most deplorable place on the face of the globe. A fortress life is never a pleasant object to contemplate, for your walks are limited to the *enceinte*, and after a week you have your citadel by heart. At Yeni-Kaléh, to add to the horror of seeing Turks all round you, the place was most inconveniently crowded. Soldiers were packed together like herrings in a cask, or emigrants on board a German vessel, and the stench was atrocious. The Russians, at the best of times, are supremely indifferent to sanitary considerations, and where Turkish dirt was combined with Moscov neglect, the consequences were simply awful.

The town itself was built on the side of a hill,

on the summit of which frowned the old Genoese fort, and the principal street ran along the sea wall. The drainage simply penetrated through the side of the hill, and collected in dank pools along the shore, and close to the barracks of the 71st. But to sum up the horrors of Yeni-Kaléh in one word —there was not a single woman in the place; not even a flat-nosed, high-cheek boned Tartar girl. Most amusingly, the officers stationed there, swore stoutly by the delights of Yeni-Kaléh, and affected to turn up their noses at their brethren confined in Kerteh.

In one respect, I grant that they beat us. They had organized certain methods to kill time; thus the 71st had converted a large hut into a very neat theatre, and the performances were something to look forward to, at any rate, as interrupting the monotony. They were very fortunate, also, in their commanding officer, the glorious General Neill, of Lucknow fame, who, though tremendously strict in all matters of duty, relaxed in the hours when he removed his regulation-stock, and was as thorough a boy as the youngest lieutenant. In him the Indian officers lost a friend and adviser, whose place can hardly be supplied. Marvellous was the way in which the General contrived to

gain the confidence of the suspicious Turks; and whenever a regiment was removed into Kertch, it was the signal for general mourning. — But it is high time to return to our waggon, where the horses have been changed during my ramble about the town.

There was a very friendly spirit of rivalry among the commanders of the land transport, as to which could turn out the best cattle, and the officers in charge at Yeni-Kaléh had prepared for us a magnificent team of eight black horses, whose coats glistened with good feeding. Our party of officers had swelled by this time to nearly a hundred; hampers had been pitchforked into the cart, and off we set for the light-house overlooking the Sea of Azoff. Proprieties were tolerably well maintained *en route*, except that some officers would get up an impromptu steeple-chase, generally resulting in sore discomfiture to one or the other of the equestrians, for the Arab horses have a peculiar way of baulking a wall. Just as you lift them to the leap, they stop short, walk up to the object to be surmounted, and clamber over it after the fashion of a cat. If you are not well up to the manoeuvre, you stand a chance of reaching the other side before your horse.

At length the light-house was reached; horses were picketted, bottles produced, pies, hams, tongues, fowls, turkeys, spread on blankets, and we went in for a glorious feed. Bottled stout and pale ale seemed to disappear by dozens. Champagne corks were popping in every direction; for, though there was no difficulty in drinking your fill, the paucity of knives and forks was an obstacle, as far as the feeding portion was concerned. After the repast was over, nothing would satisfy our host, but that my wife must ascend into the lanthorn of the light-house — a feat no lady had ever attempted.

The stairs running up the tower were in a tolerable state of preservation; but when we reached the light-room our difficulties commenced. The short ladder leading up to the platform had been removed, and the windows had also been appropriated with the lamps for theatrical purposes. However, we managed to get up at last, and the view amply repaid the exertion. At our feet lay expanded the lovely Sea of Azoff, with the white cleanly fishing villages glistening in the sunlight. Far away, as a speck on the horizon, was Fort Arabat, which our gun-boats had bombarded a few months before. But there was something

almost oppressive in the sight of this immense sea, unenlivened by a single gleaming sail or sign of humanity; it aroused in me the same feelings that came over me on visiting the crater lakes on the Eifel, or the mysterious Mummel See in Baden. As the Scotch would say, there is something that's no canny about these desolate patches of water.

To our left, we saw the long sandy Peninsula of Taman, stretching out between us and the Asiatic coast; and at one end the ruins of a Russian fort, which it had been vainly supposed would close the Sea of Azoff against our gun-boats. Weird and ghastly enough the sand-strip looked in the bright sunshine, reminding me of the tales I had read of West Indian barracoons, or the fever-laden islands on the African coast. It was a relief to turn in the direction of the Black Sea, which lay in front of us, and to gaze on our trim gun-boats lying in Kertch bay; for they seemed to supply a connecting link with civilization. But I cannot describe the impression the scene produced on me in a better way than by quoting three lines from the *Rejected Addresses* :—

“It did not seem inhabited,  
But some vast city of the dead,  
All was so hushed and still.”

My reverie was dispelled by a sharp cry from below. It was time to return to the dinner awaiting us at Yeni-Kaléh, so we soon hurried down the light-house, and turned our backs for ever on the Sea of Azoff. Everything was bundled into the cart, my wife included ; and off we set, as hard as eight strong animals could drag the light vehicle. The ambulance waggons are supposed to possess springs ; but, from my own experience, I heartily pity any wounded man, who has to go down from the front in one of them. Eugh ! the only thing to which I can compare it, is riding on the limber of a 12-pounder gun, going at full speed across country, and where you are compelled to hold on by all, even your eyelids.

Never shall I forget General Neill's look of amazement when our procession flew past him, as he took his constitutional before-dinner ride ; and, I have no doubt, we bore considerable resemblance to Lützoff's "Wild Hunt." The Arab drivers were yelling and cracking their long whips ; the officers shouting at the top of their lungs, and galloping at break-neck speed, while my unworthy self stood in the front of the cart, urging the drivers to increased speed, by offering fabulous sums in paras. Looking back on the scene, as I

sit quietly at my writing-desk, it is a miracle to me how we escaped alive. Somehow, though, when you have been for any length of time in presence of an enemy, you do not set such value on your carcass as in more peaceful times. *Now*, I grumble if a Hansom comes too close to my nobility as I cross the street.

I need not stop to describe how the rest of the evening was spent; though, I suppose, as usual, that I drank a great deal too much. The last scene I can remember, was a grand torch-light procession which accompanied us to the hut prepared for our reception in camp.

I have a faint recollection of asking some two hundred fellows to come and dine with me that day week, but I presume they forgot it. Still, the memory of my Crimean pic-nic remains as a pleasant oasis in the midst of many most painful reminiscences.

## CHAPTER XX.

## THE EMBARKATION.

**W**AS I glad or sorry, when orders came up from the front, to make immediate preparations for evacuating Kertch? Upon my honor, I do not know. It is true, I was very pleased with the idea, that I was going to get rid of my stores, and those odious books, which I never could make balance; and which I fear I fudged enormously—but, on the other hand, there was something delightfully free and easy about my mode of life; and I had learned to like idleness, which is, after all, the great charm of a military career; were it not so, we should not find so many men sacrificing their future, for one and a penny *per diem*.

But, before I could thoroughly enjoy my ease, I had a frightful ordeal to go through: all those Miniés which I had taken such pride in having furbished, must be packed in large coffin-like boxes, all the military stores which crowded six



rooms, must be checked off, and sent on board ship. Of course, every department was equally busy; and the most artful schemes were devised, to get finished first. However, my task was completed, six bills of lading, specifying every article, made out, and signed by the Captain of the transport—my books verified by the signature of the Adjutant General; and I was a gentleman at large. All I had to do, was, to draw my pay, and wait patiently till the Quartermaster sent my sailing orders.

During this time of leisure, my favorite haunt was the little quay, whence I watched the embarkation of the troops. It was found advisable to get the Turks off first, for fear of any collision with the Russians; and for this purpose, rafts were constructed, which the little "Bulldog" steamer, tugged out into the Bay, laden with men. No accident occurred to mar the fun. All went on steadily and quickly; and the only thing in which we were deficient was transports.

One curious living freight we removed, was about 500 Tatar families who fancied themselves compromised, as the men had served in our mounted militia, and the Sultan had offered them shelter in the Dobrud-ja. Astounding was the

quantity of luggage they possessed ; and I hardly think it was all legitimately obtained. But our authorities had behaved with their usual perspicuity. At the last moment, they insisted on the Europeans handing back every Russian article in their possession, no matter if honestly paid for ; and those who had not been wise enough to send their "loot" home, suffered the penalty. Well, the majority obeyed ; and I have no doubt the Tatars collared the pictures, etc., with their tongues in their cheeks at our folly. I never heard, by the way, whether our Pacha, who sent off forty-six pianofortes, was called upon to refund ; but I do not think so, for did he not belong to the favoured race.

Gradually our force dwindled away. Ships calculated to house two hundred passengers, bore off entire regiments, twelve hundred strong ; and the men were packed as tightly as herrings in a barrel. But that was of no consequence ; the passage was a short one ; and, besides, we had done with them. They were no longer dangerous as a body ; we were about to hand them back to their own Padishah ; and he would not be particular were a dozen or so stifled.

More and more regiments disappeared, the

contingent officers were being shipped, and still we did not receive our embarkation ticket. After a fortnight's delay, a D. A. A. Q. G, called upon us, stating that we were under orders for the next morning at ten, and that the "Goshawk" was selected for us, as it was the only vessel likely to come up, with accommodation for a lady. My wife, remembering the horrors of a cattle-vessel, was only too glad to accept the offer; and the whole night was spent in packing.

The whole of the next day passed away, however, in conveying to the "Goshawk" a regiment of Turks; and it was not till three in the afternoon, that we went aboard the little "Bulldog," a small tug, which had found its way, by some mysterious process from Newcastle, and had stood us in good stead, though she was not much larger than a ship's jolly boat. Here we were detained a long time waiting for another lady, the wife of the Russian Police Inspector, who was migrating with all her Penates, through wholesome fear of the Cossacks. She had only seventy-six packages, varying in size from a wardrobe to a rat-trap, and all things considered, this should be thought very moderate. A man is not a Russian, and a Police Inspector to boot, without having opportunities to earn an honest livelihood by his vocation.

The "Goshawk" was slightly crowded, I must confess. She was a pretty yacht-like screw of about one hundred and fifty tons; and had on board eighty-six cabin passengers, and a regiment of 1,400 men. Add to this all the luggage, and about twenty van loads of things remembered at the last moment; and I began to pray that the Black Sea would only prove favourable, or we might run a risk of going to the bottom.

My first care was to conduct my wife to the lady's cabin; but we found we had been forestalled. There were assembled the Police Inspector's wife and her maid, six children, her father, and her husband's father; all, with the exception of the children, smoking cigarettes. Well, the atmosphere was powerful; but as the gentlemen made no attempt to give way, evidently looking upon us in the light of intruders, and as, moreover, my knowledge of Russ was *nil*, we had to yield. However, the captain very kindly relieved us from our difficulty, by surrendering his own cabin.

I forced my way on to the quarter-deck, and looked down on the human swarm, that lay piled, as it were, on the top of each other, to the very bows. The sailors tried in vain to force their

path through the surging mass of Turks, to perform their duties; but it was a hopeless task. In his despair, the captain called in an interpreter, and proceeded with him to the Bimbashi; but with all the will in the world, the latter could do nothing. If he pulled Osman by the ear, the pressure thrust Ali into his place; if Ali cowered beneath the Bim's angry glance, he only exposed Mustafa's round face grinning affably behind him. At last, the Turkish officers were compelled to draw their swords and rush into the crowd, using the flat of their sabres, and as the men had only the choice of going overboard or below; they wisely preferred the latter, and the sailors were at length enabled to man the capstan, and get ready for the start.

In the meantime, and while the jolly "Yo-heave-oh!" of the sailors fitfully fell on my ear, I was leaning over the bulwark, and watching the pretty glistening town, where I had spent seven such chequered months, and trying to draw up a mental balance sheet. I had played my play out; I had some eighty pounds to receive, and my connexion with the Government would be settled. That was my active, as the French would say. My passive, however, was not very encouraging.

In the first place, I still owed a ponderous balance to my outfitter—who would be sure to have a heavy bill to make up directly I landed in England. In a word, the capital, with which I was to start in the world anew, was considerably worse than nothing. I had a healthy rheumatism, moreover, permanently settled in my right shoulder; I was shaken to pieces by hard-drinking and exposure, and, lastly, I had assumed an inveterate habit of idleness, which made me loathe the very sight of a pen. Altogether, I confess, the prospect looked anything but cheerful. However, “sufficient unto,” &c. I had the prospect of a jolly trip across Europe before me, and I had a good deal of the Micawber element about me; something was sure to “turn up.”

A chink of money suddenly attracted my attention, and I turned round. As truly as I am a sinner, I saw a horsecloth stretched out on deck with several cards upon it, and a group of officers eagerly collected around it. They could not wait till the vessel was under weigh, but were already engaged at faro. Money was changing hands at a tremendous pace; and it was evident none of those gentlemen were troubling their minds about

the future. Perhaps their philosophy was the best after all. At any rate, their example gave me an excuse for shaking off all glum thoughts; and I was soon as interested as any of them in the vacillations of fortune. Not that I played, though; it would not have done to mortgage the small sum I had to receive at Stamboul, and throw myself and my wife upon the charity of the British Consulate. And, yet, heaven knows, there were many among those gamblers who wanted money more sorely than I did, for I had a profession to fall back upon; while men, whose whole fortune is a sword, too often want a dinner in times of peace.

The Turks, by this time, were all quiet; for they were imitating their betters. They, too, had collected in groups, and were gambling with unexampled ferocity, although the stakes were trifling. Though I had watched them hundreds of times, I could not discover the nature of the game they played, for the cards they employed were perfectly illegible from grease. However, they were as inveterate gamblers as the best or worst of their superior officers.

Not a man on board the vessel, I am convinced, wasted a thought on the town he was quitting

for ever, or the perils he had undergone. For four months no man could have said that his life was worth an hour's purchase; for the Turks might have mutinied at any moment, and massacred the handful of Europeans; we had been exposed to an attack with very doubtful chances of repulsing it; and I am convinced the Russians would have shown us no quarter; for we did not deserve it, after the horrors of which the Turks had been guilty, and which we had passively permitted. Possibly, of all those players, there was hardly one who knew what he would be doing that day six months, or where he could apply for a shilling when he had exhausted his bounty money; and, yet, they staked their sovereigns as if they had an unlimited account at Coutts'. Or, was it that very precariousness which rendered them so reckless?

The anchor had, by this time, come home, and the screw began slowly revolving. The vessel quivered through all her timbers, as if tearing herself reluctantly away; and we slowly steamed toward Fort Paul. The sun was gilding the burnished copper turrets of the two churches, and the white museum shone, as if rejoicing at the departure of the invaders. To me, the receding landscape was



unexpressibly mournful, for I seemed to be drifting from my anchorage into an unknown sea. Besides, the parting, perhaps for ever, from many comrades I had learned to love, was most painful. There were among them several who would return direct to their duties in India, without revisiting England ; and there was but slight prospect of my seeing them again ; for my life would have been refused by the most speculative insurance office. Twelve months before, I had revolted against the humdrum of my existence ; now I would have given ten years of my life, had my Crimean exodus proved to be a dream.

The ship shot round Akborun point, and Kertch had disappeared from my sight for ever. Giving myself a rough shake to dispel all these melancholy impressions, I at once broke with the past, and prepared with a confident purpose for the present. And the welcome sound of the dinner bell confirmed me in my resolutions.

So farewell, Kertch ! I am glad, in one sense, that I had the opportunity of visiting thee ; and I only trust that the horrors of which I was an involuntary witness, may not be charged to my

account. Much has been said and written in our papers about the barbarities committed by Napoleon's Turcos ; but they were but child's play, when compared with the atrocities which the Contingent committed, under the tacit sanction of an English Government.

## CHAP. XXI.

## DOWN THE BLACK SEA.

WHEN I emerged the next morning from the stifling berth (for the Black Sea at the end of May was hot as an oven) and reached the deck, I was the only cabin passenger about, and was enabled to enjoy my favorite *douche*. This is very simple, yet most effectual: the decks of a vessel are usually washed by means of a huge tub, filled by a fire engine; and for the sum of one shilling, a sailor is only too glad to hold the pipe over your head, as you squat in the tub, and allow the reviving stream to pour down your head and shoulders. There is nothing like it, be assured.

Before breakfast I had plenty of amusement in watching the manœuvres of the Turks, who had shaken into their places somehow. Stripped to their waists, they squatted on the deck, pouring buckets of water over each other, or busily engaged in washing their shirts, which, however,

only became a rather lighter shade of dirty yellow. Here and there a fellow might be seen munching at a ship's biscuit, or a group collected round a fire of chips and boiling the indispensable coffee. In another part of the deck, half a dozen men were crooning a most melancholy song to the sound of a *balalaika*, while another man performed a monotonous dance; the only apparent movement of the body being at the hips. Unmeaning as it seems, the development of this dance produces the perfection of the Awalim's wanton movements. I believe it is originally an Arab dance; and though clumsy enough in a man, can be rendered so suggestive by the *Almeh*, that no person having due respect for himself, can gaze upon it twice. A very vivid description of this saltatory movement will be found in poor Bayle St. John's "Two Years in a Levantine Family": and is worthy of perusal, as proving the utter prostration of Turkish morality. But I have alluded sufficiently to this odious subject, and have only done so, because it affords a characteristic of Mohammedan life.

By the time breakfast was over, and a mattress laid on the deck for my wife (who suffers from the *maladie de mer* at the mere sight of the ocean), the quarter deck was invaded by the Bimbashi

and his favorite captain or spy, which are convertible terms; for a Turkish colonel always selects one officer to report to him all that is going on. The Bim was a very fine old fellow, with a long white beard, and wearing the indispensable fur coat. He squatted on his hams all the day, paying but slight attention to the busy group of gamblers, and telling his rosary with great unction. Every four hours he struck his sword on the deck before him, and performed his orisons by smiting his forehead many times on the planks. This movement is exactly like that of the Russians in their Churches. — I wonder which nation borrowed from the other. Can Mr. Sala tell me? At about four o'clock, he had his dinner served up, consisting of some forty dishes, which he disposed of with marvellous rapidity; after which his servant brought a silver gilt bason, and poured the water over his hands and the old gentleman wound his meal up by a muttering sound, which was strangely suggestive to me of "grace after meat."

To my mind, there is no such thorough-paced a gentleman as the Turk of *sangre azul*; and our "Bim" was no exception to the rule. Seeing how much my wife was suffering, he came over to her and gaily held out his hand, which she, half

frightened, accepted. But he gently patted her hand; and, then, suddenly clapping his palms together, gave some directions to his servant. A few minutes after, a band of native musicians clambered up to the quarter deck, and began singing a *bulbul* song to the sound of the crooning instruments.

I felt great interest in a little boy of about seven, who was dressed in the full uniform of a Turkish *topji* or artilleryman. He was a special protégé of the colonel, who had found him an orphan at Kertch, and appointed him his heir. It was most affecting to hear the poor little fellow talking in his broken Turkish, and helping himself out with Russian; but he was as fond of the "Bim," as if he had been his veritable father. In this respect the Turks display as much kindness as they do to dumb animals—but, having them! they must have some good qualities to float off their huge weight of sin.

(I dare say my readers will have noticed a strange vacillation in my opinion of the Turks. There were times when I should have been glad to hear that they were extirpated; at others, I really admired them. I cannot help it—I write down my honest impressions—the Turks are a

strange medley of good and bad, the latter largely predominating ; but, then, they have no hypocrisy about them. They are true children of nature, with every defect on the surface. On one hand, they are generous and hospitable to a fault ; they would die sooner than injure a dumb animal ; but, then, confound them ! they have no more hesitation about removing a Kafir dog, than they have about eating a pillau.)

At any rate, the Bimbashi of the 10th Regiment was a perfect gentleman ; and I sat for hours by his side, listening to his simple, honest remarks. I really do not believe that he had a fault about him. He was simply a good, religious man, bearing a remarkable resemblance to poor dear RICHARD GUYON, the most true gentleman of Nature's creation I ever met in my life. With that nobly noble man, I had the honour of steaming at a later date to Varna ; and the modest philosophy he instilled into me will be a lesson, I trust, when I lie on my dying bed.

Equally simple was the morality my Bim expounded : there was none of that highly-flavoured doctrinism which distinguishes the true Moslem, as much as it does the most enlightened Low Churchman ; and though he might, now and then,

indulge in a versicle of the Koran, he would withdraw it in a moment, as if pained at the thought that he might offend my prejudices. And that, after all, is the great merit of the Mussulman in my eyes: he never attempts to make proselytes, and allows the most perfect tolerance in religious matters. He may hold his private opinion as to your future prospects, because you are an unbeliever; but he never goes to the length of our "unco' guid." I remember once visiting Tewkesbury races, and as I walked on to the course, to my utter confoundment "a man and a brother," dressed in seedy black, thrust into my hand a card, bearing the awful communication, that all race-goers were bound to—I need not say where. I did not knock him down, though I have regretted my abstention ever since; but I had the satisfaction of seeing him placed under a pump a few hours later by a gang of disappointed thimble-riggers; who, in their turn, had a swim in the Avon, not for defending their religious principles, but because they tried to cheat.

The Mollahs are the only men in Turkey who are intolerant, but for a very good reason. They are clever, well educated priests, and they are perfectly aware, that if they allow Christianity to



spread, they will soon be nowhere. They hold on to the Establishment; they like the pious foundations which sincere Moslemin have established in their behalf; and they have a shrewd suspicion that a latitudinarian government may yet institute a reformation more terrible in its consequences than that of Harry the Eighth, called by bitter irony, Defender of the Faith. He, I believe, produced a Reformation, which all must admire, for the sake of the loaves and fishes; and it is just possible that ABD-UL-MEDJID, albeit the son of Faith, when he finds loans impracticable in the London market, may attempt a grab at the rich endowments of the Mosques. Hence the Mollahs make a strenuous stand, and remain true Turks; and I do not see why we should blame them. Standing in the ancient ways must be the principle of every conservative, and therefore orthodox, Faith—or, else, we shall be having church-rates abolished next, which in some minds are closely connected with the end of the world (*vide* Mr. Newdegate's speeches, *passim*).

I am afraid that I shall be accused of heterodoxy, for daring to insinuate any comparison between Christianity and Moslemism, but I cannot help it. Still, I find the same system of

money working in both Mosque and Church, and *exploité* for the similar purpose. I am very sorry it should be so; but, as I said before, I only deal in facts. In a word, the Dean and the Mollah stand side by side in their desire to defend temporalities. In their minds, Church and State are equally connected. They both believe that their kingdom is not of this world; but they both look with equal sharpness after the filthy lucre—the dross that perishes. But, then, the Mahommedan is an infidel, and that makes all the difference.

But, while I have been indulging in these most irreverent thoughts, and getting my brain into a muddle, our screw has been pursuing its inexorable course. On the second morning, when I come up for my bath, I almost forget it, as I find myself in the centre of the Bosphorus. But my sailor, recalling the promised shilling, makes his appearance, and I undergo the *douche*. When the effect has worn off, how strange is the feeling that overpowers me.

I regard the impregnable Bosphorus, I alone, I am sorry to say; and suddenly it occurs to me that, although those frowning fortalices threaten destruction to every vessel that dares to approach their batteries, the clever Turks have made no

defences on the land-side. Every fortress is easy to be captured in the reverse; and supposing the Russians were—say in fifty years—to land an army at Varna, and take these forts one after the other, what would become of the vaunted Bosphorus in such a case? But, pah! the English and French are now firm allies to prevent such a consummation. The only question is as to the alliance being warranted to wear well.

I am not going to bestow one word on the beauties of the Bosphorus, for every man who was in the Crimea can do that as well as I. I can only say, that it is the finest piece of water in the world, no matter where the next is; and I was very glad when I found our vessel anchored off the Golden Horn; for the currents are atrocious, and, as some people say, rather dangerous.

The only real fun we had in the whole excursion, was when our screw came opposite Dolma-Bagtchè, the Sultan's palace for the nonce; and our misguided Turks began singing his Padishahship's praises in a very loud key. Our worthy Captain, who was conning the ship at the time, was so bothered, that he burst out into a furious rage, and declared that, unless the Bonos were

quiet, he would straightway return to Kertch. The threat rendered our regiment as quiet as lambs.

When we swung round to our anchor at the Golden Horn, a fleet of steam-tugs put off at once to our help. The first of them was so energetic that it carried off our side-ladder ; and, not satisfied with this exploit, smashed her paddle-wheel against a near-lying man-of-war. But such slight accidents are of no consequence, especially when Nunky Bull pays for all. I possessed a friend, fortunately, in the good city of Pera, who sent me off a horse-boat to land my wife and the other *impedimenta* ; and by their aid we reached Galata.

I had rather not describe our journey from the wharf to the Hotel de l'Europe, for no man likes to write himself down an ass. If I say that I suffered in the way of sundry piastres, perhaps my readers will accept the will for the deed. I never met with anybody yet who would like honestly to describe his dealings with Turkish Hammals ; and I ask in mercy to be excused. Suffice it to say, that I was swindled to an enormous extent—that is quite permissible in Turkey—and I was only too

glad when the hospitable roof of M. Destuniano welcomed me.

But as that gentleman was in every sense too dear to me, I cannot think of doing less than devoting a chapter to him and his dealings.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## A PEROTE HOTEL.

AS I hobble off the red-hot stones of Top-Khanèh Hill, into the Hotel de l'Europe, the gloom of the hall with its fragrant orange trees dazzles me for a time, and seems to blind me. When I grow used to the change, I notice a short stout man, bowing profusely before me. It is M. Destuniano. There is nothing to distinguish him from any other honest man, save the inevitable fez, which always prepares you for being swindled, and he rubs his hands in ecstasy, as he surveys my ample stock of luggage. What a rich harvest he will make, to be sure!

Him I address reverently, for he is a great man for the present. On his fiat depends whether I shall have shelter beneath his roof, for he has no lack of customers, be assured. But there is one preliminary difficulty: M. D., apparently speaks no known language. I try him with all my stock,

and he answers in the most insane *pot-pourri* of French, Turkish, Neo-Greek, and Italian. It flows from his eloquent lips so rapidly, that I am irresistibly reminded of the Post Horn gallope, and my foot involuntarily marks time. One thing, however, I fully comprehend: his terms are 15s. a day for each person, without extras; and for my servant seven. Now, considering I was struck off the strength of the Contingent, and was only awaiting the good pleasure of the Chief Paymaster, I am afraid I severely blessed a paternal Government for putting me to such an expense.

However, there was no help for it, I might go further and fare worse. Misserie's was the crack hotel, but the only difference was, the increased tariff of prices. It is true that Misserie explained this, by pointing with conscious pride to the bell ropes, as a grand step towards civilization; but what was the use of bells, if no one answered them? Pulling the rope certainly afforded a little exercise, but that grows wearisome at last. If, in despair, you rushed into the corridor, and seized a waiter, he would jerk himself from your hand with a *subito, Signore!* and avoided your vicinity for the rest of the day.

To give a perfect idea of Misserie, even after the

war; I must supply an illustrative anecdote. Poor Mr. Horseley Robertson, who went out as Commissioner of the Euphrates Valley Railway with his wife, was attacked with dysentery at that hotel, of which he eventually died. But Misserie stuck to his bond; he agreed to supply two meals a day, and there they were. He would not make beef tea for a dying man. Hence Mr. Robertson had to be removed to the Globe, and the removal had a share in increasing his illness. Intending tourists are earnestly recommended to bear these facts in mind.

I had another resource, certainly: I could take a lodging à la Franca. But the sight of the staircases was quite sufficient for me, and I was warned, that, so soon as my back was turned, it was very possible my chattels might disappear. In fact, this really occurred with one of our Artillery Captains. His Saïs went off, and carried with him all his masters' savings, and other unconsidered trifles, on which he could lay his hand. All things considered, I think I acted wisely in remaining at the Hotel de l' Europe.

Apart from the prices, I really had no fault to find with the Hotel. Our bed-room was remarkably clean, almost elegantly decorated with white



muslin ; and, chief point of all, I had no occasion to purchase insect powder. I really believe the Perote chemists derive their income from the sale of this most pernicious stuff ; which is, if possible, worse than the disease. I called on an officer, residing in a common lodging-house one morning, and found him just emerging from bed. He was a caution, as the Yankees would say. His beard, whiskers, and moustaches were floured over with this sickly smelling compound ; but when I turned the clothes down—eugh ! I did not require any breakfast that morning.

The living, too, was very fair. Breakfast was usually on the table by eight, and remained there till eleven. We had cold fowls and ham, tongues, and before all, delicate fried gold-fish ; which are worthy of consideration by the stay-at-home gourmet. Bread was very good, as it always is in Turkey, except when served out by the government commissariat. A light french claret was at discretion, and there was plenty of butter, which no one touched, simply that it was Irish and rancid. Curiously enough, I never tasted a bit of good butter during my whole exodus, except once, at Kertch, when I persuaded an old German woman to churn me a pound, for which she modestly charged seven shillings.

Dinner, too, was very much à la Française, though it bore a few characteristics, evidencing that we were still in the land of the Heathen. The fish was execrably served; we had soup tasting as strongly of meat as if a cow had tumbled into the Bosphorus; and the meat was very so-so, evidencing that Baker Street shows had not yet been imitated in Constantinople. We had also pillau after the approved style, every grain of rice standing out independently, and as dry as a bone, and a very peculiar and pleasant dish, known by the name of Dolmas, which, being interpreted, signifies vegetable marrows, with the inside scooped out, and the cavity filled with mince-meat. I have tried this dish in England but without success: for our marrows grow too large and rank. In Turkey they rarely exceed the size of a Cochin China egg, and much care is paid to their cultivation. The Sultan's Palace Dolma Bagtché, means the "Marrow-garden," the ground on which it is built having formerly being devoted to the cultivation of that vegetable.

As to the company which daily assembled at five to perform the solemn sacrifice of dining; well, it was heterogenous. The English officers, as is their wont, all sat together, *idem* the French;

while the lower part of the table was held by commercial travellers, clerks of mercantile houses; and last but not least, the principal members of the operatic troupe. I need hardly say that the latter supplied all the fun of the table; for the members of that honorable profession are thorough freemasons, and carry an unfailing stock of good spirits in their wallets. They may suffer from a paucity of shirts now and then, or else they are marvellously belied — but fun they always have as a compensation. But they must be in good feather here, judging by the quantity of champagne they imbibe; but then it is only seven shillings a bottle, and cannot hurt them, for it unmistakeably reveals its rhubarb origin. Now, we used to obtain this for five francs a bottle at Kertch, while here 500 miles nearer its home, the price was half as much again. Strange land of contradictions, surely, this Turkey!

The bag-men, too — I really beg their pardon, commercial gents—are as much at home, as if doing a round in England. Every morning you see them come down smiling and smoothly shaven, and the “boots” (represented by a grininghammal) is standing ready to carry their parcels of samples to the Perote shops. There is fierce rivalry

between them and the bearded sons of Gaul, and then is a parlous interchange of strong language, when they come across each other in the narrow streets; but they mean no harm. Business is business all the world over.

Not holding my uniform in that respect with which some regarded it, I had frequent conversations with these travelling gentry; and it was most curious to listen to their exchange of confidences. I must do them the credit to say that they were untiring on behalf of their employers, and even exposed themselves to many dangers, so as to get off a parcel of calicos. One of them, had penetrated in the past winter to the very heart of Asia Minor, and opened up a profitable business at Erzeroum. He had been dug out of the snow seventeen times, and had expended eight horses in his perilous journey; but he gained his point. Possibly, he was as much a hero as the boldest stormer of the Redan; but he did not wear a red coat. In that lies all the merit.

Nor, do they get so swindled, as might be supposed. The Armenians would doubtlessly do them, if it were worth their while; but they have sound reasons for being honest. In the first place, they obtain a good article at a reasonable price, which,

if they dealt with the Perote brokers, would be greatly increased and a worse article put off; and, secondly, their customers have obtained a very healthy appreciation of trade-marks. Horrocks' name is a guarantee even among those benighted Pagans; and though unscrupulous factors may forge it, the natives are much too clever to be taken in. Hence the Armenians meet their bills, when they come due, and make up for the sacrifice by swindling everybody else with whom they have dealings. But the commercial Briton troubles his head very slightly about such matters. So long as he is paid, it would be an impertinence to inquire at whose expense the operation was effected.

Another great source of amusement to me, at the table d'hôte, was afforded by the French officers. The stay-at-home English have certainly very peculiar ideas as to the French army generally, and the officers in particular; they suppose them to be bluff hearty fellows, perfectly free from that aristocratic *morgue*, of which they are apt to accuse our officers' corps. *Experto crede!* This is quite a mistake; and I can honestly state that French officers, as a rule, are the most arrant—but I will not complete my sentence, lest those

famous French colonels should cross the channel and drag me from my *repaire*.

They may be generally classified as Anglo-philists and Anglo-phobists; and I hardly know which to like better. The former had assumed a most sickening tone of patronising after the Redan business; and their remarks usually ended with a *voyez-vous, mon cher*, and an inimitable shrug of the shoulders, meant to signify that it was no fault of ours if the Gallic cock now outcrowded the roar of the British Leopard. These gentlemen, too, with their usual amiability, spread all the *scabreux* stories about the English, which are now accepted as a rule of faith in the East.

The Anglo-phobists, or rather haters, had, at any rate, the one merit of sincerity; they did not like any dealings with the English save at the point of the sword, and twisted their moustache vindictively, nursing their wrath by hissing the word "Varterloo" between their clenched teeth. But they never boasted. While hating, they still respected our manly qualities; all they desired was to go into training for a decisive encounter, and let the best man win.

Of such was M. de Delisaire, colonel of the 117th infantry, who honoured us with his presence

at the table d'hôte. I admired him for his candour, and the unbounded reliance he placed in the good qualities of his men, as well as for the open way in which he alluded to the defects of our system. After a while, we coaxed him into our midst, and had many a good-humoured discussion over sundry bottles of champagne, and I slightly flatter myself that we partly converted him; at any rate, he condescended to laugh at our sallies, made it a practice to call us "*farceurs*," but left off hissing that ill-omened word.

One day, after dinner, when we were discussing some point in the military code of honour, he suddenly proposed to tell us an illustrative anecdote. Here it is:—

#### THE FRENCH COLONEL'S STORY.

"I presume that, Messieurs, although it was their ill-fortune not to be present before Sebastopol, are yet acquainted with the leading events of the 8th September?"

(Confound the old rascal, as if we had not hung with breathless lips on every word read from the columns of the *Times*, descriptive of that day of giants.)

However, we bowed our acquiescence, and the Colonel proceeded.

“On that glorious day, I had the honour of leading the battalion which first held the Malakoff.

Pausing for a moment to let his words sink in :

“As you are aware, we were not so secure as we at first anticipated. We had seized the tower ; but we had no artillery ammunition with us, and could see the Russians assembling in force to advance once again to the assault. I had but twelve hundred men left of my storming party, the rest lay dead and dying in the trenches ; and there was no present prospect of support.

“What to do ?

“I was convinced that there must be large stores of ammunition in the Malakoff ; for the Russians had been surprised at their post, and had been unable to remove anything in their precipitate retreat ; but I had no time to go in search of it. The Russian troops were already forming, and I could hear the rapid roll of the drum. I had no alternative ; I must either retreat at once—but the idea was impossible to a Frenchman—or allow myself to be cut down, with my men, in defence of the post.



“ Suddenly, an inspiration, heaven-sent, came to my aid. We were saved !”

(I omit here some half page of interjectional matter, in which the colonel indulged, to proceed to the great point of his story.)

“ In storming the Tower, we had captured six Russian officers of different grades. They had surrendered their swords, and were prisoners on parole, for we had no men 'to spare in guarding them. These gentlemen I called before me, and thus addressed them :

“ ‘ Messieurs, the safety of my battalion depends on my finding the ammunition contained in the Tower, I must, therefore, call on you to give me the requisite information.’

“ Perfect silence ; not one of them opened his lips.

“ I began to grow impatient, and, therefore, went on :

“ ‘ Messieurs, this is no time for trifling ; your compatriots are preparing for the assault, and I must have the information.’

“ Their faces shone with satisfaction ; but they changed when I continued :

“ ‘ I, therefore, give you two minutes to decide ; unless you consent to tell me where the ammuni-

tion is kept, it will be my painful duty to shoot you in turn. Your safety is in your own hands.'

"With these words, I ordered a file to advance; and so soon as the time had expired, I advanced to the eldest of the party.

" 'Will you tell me?' I said.

"He shook his head indignantly, and tore open his coat, as if to welcome the bullet. One of my men fired, and he lay a corpse at my feet.

"The same fate befell the two others.

"But with the fourth man, my turn arrived: he was a Greek, and too fond of his life. He revealed the spot where the magazine was. The ammunition was got up, and the guns loaded to receive the Russians, who were advancing from the town.

"And yet," the Colonel said philosophically, "I could not have purchased my life with such infamy. The other two officers spat on the coward, and assailed him with the fiercest abuse.

"Poor devil! his treachery was soon requited. Almost the first ball fired by his countrymen, crashed through his brain.

"The day was won. We kept the Russians at bay with their own artillery, till our reserves came up. The Malakoff was ours; and before long we could see the Russians preparing to cross to the north side.

R

“To your health, Gentlemen!”

And the Colonel tossed off his glass of champagne, as a species of funeral ceremony to the memory of the Russian officers he had murdered.

’Tis an ugly word, I allow; but the only one permissible under the circumstances. The Russians were prisoners, and as such ought to have been protected, *coute que coute*: but M. de Delisaire was a thoroughly practical man, and allowed no such foolish scruples of honor to interpose. It was simply a life for a life.

Though something may be urged in the Frenchman’s excuse, for it was a tremendous position in which to be placed; there can be no doubt as to the heroism of the Russians. It is all very well for old fellows, who served through the Peninsular war, running down the Russians, and pretending they were inferior to the French in fighting qualities; but all those who were engaged in the Crimea know the contrary. I feel convinced that they and their earthworks were the toughest foes we ever had.

Somehow or another, the French Colonel’s story left a bad taste in my mouth; and I fought shy of his acquaintance in future.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## HERE AND THERE IN PERA.

**T**HERE is not much to see, after all, in the Frankish quarter of Constantinople; at any rate it is not worth a voyage of 2,500 miles. All the stock sights of the Faubourg have been already described so often, that I shall not attempt to repeat them, but merely set down a few of the things that struck me, after eight months' intimacy with Turks.

It is the fashion to rate Pera, "an Italian city of the second class"; but this is nonsense. Pera has its own peculiar stamp, position, mode of building, inhabitants—all are peculiar, and can only be compared with Pera itself. The main street in which are the theatre, the Jardin des Fleurs, and all the best shops, is connected with Turckdom, by the infamous paving, which cuts the boots to pieces; and by the dark-eyed beauties, who go waddling along them in their clumsy

yellow boots, to buy European nicknacks, and have a flirtation with the young counter-jumper.

I certainly pity the Turks for one thing; the Crimean war made a deep breach in their domestic institutions. The signs of feminine emancipation were curiously progressive. The Yashmak grew with each day more diaphanous, until, at length, it only added an increased charm to the fully developed beauties. The women could not be kept in doors, they must see the young Kafirs in their shell jackets; and would buy in Pera, instead of patronising the Stamboul bazaar. Poor Machmet Bey, or Ahmed Pacha, scratched his beard in vain. The domestic sceptre had been torn from his hands and it was hopeless offering any suggestions as to the sack and the bowstring. The jades knew that the French Gendarmes would not suffer anything of that sort to go on; so they snapped their fingers at their lords and masters, and drove them nearly insane with jealousy. I believe the hapless Pacha of Varna really went out of his mind, when the allies landed, for he could not get his harem out of the way; and those dogs of infidels, would poke their unhallowed noses even into the sanctuary of domesticity.

The Perote ladies, too, are well worth a journey

to see, sitting behind the gilded lattices. They indulged in a harmless eye-flirtation with the English Officers; and many of them, I believe, secured husbands. But there was one thing I could never get over; however charming the Perote belles might be: it was not pleasant to see the harmless flea disporting about them, or the equanimity with which they captured the intruder, and gently whistled him down the wind. No one ever kills an insect in Constantinople. They live a charmed life; and consequently increase and multiply in a manner terrifying to the English insecticide, who institutes a massacre of the innocents whenever he gets the chance.

There are two great places of parade in Pera, where the *beau monde* is visible every evening; the Piccolo Santo and the Jardin des Fleurs. The former is a roughly paved quadrangl , at the top of the burying-place, and surrounded by the principal hotels. From this point a magnificent view is obtained of the Golden Horn, while the side of the hill down to Cassim Pacha, is studded with the oddly shaped Turkish tombstones. During the war, a band played here every night and people paraded up and down with the regularity of sentries. During my three weeks'

stay in Pera, two dead dogs lay in the burning sun, not a yard from the promenade; but no one ever thought of removing them, and destroying the offensive smell. Evidently what was everybody's business, is nobody's in Stamboul.

The *Jardin des Fleurs* has no special claim to that floral appellation—at any rate, it is not like any garden of flowers I ever visited. It was a dusty, frowzy garden behind an inn, illuminated with half a dozen paper lamps, and with an execrable band, where the fashionables varied their amusement by walking in a circle. The only relaxation was drinking very hot and strong rum-punch, which the ladies swallowed, without making any wry faces as if pretending they did not like it.

As for the Opera, that was fun. I do not pretend to find any fault with the singing; for the troupe did their best, even if that were bad; but the gallery gods were in their glory. They were generally soldiers and sailors; and never a night that there was not a contest ranging from two up to a hundred. The Turks, who visited the theatre in great numbers, used to look on at these scenes with wonder; but grew used to them at last. I daresay they thought they were a portion of the entertainments.

Another peculiarity of the theatre was, that all the assassinations were effected in its immediate vicinity. During my stay, these amounted to seven; and this was thought rather below the average. The way to save yourself, however, is charmingly simple. You need only expend threepence for a paper lanthorn and dip, and you can walk about Pera at any hour as safely as the Irish lady in Moore's song traversed her native land. He must have a very poor value of his life who will not insure it for the sum of threepence.

The great gathering place of the English officers in Pera was Droyschmann's, the confectioner, where fabulous prices were paid for very bad dinners. I should say that, striking the average, I consumed twenty ices a day in that establishment, which formed no small item in my expenditure. But, then, you were sure to meet everybody there, and hear all the *canards* of the hour. Whatever the purpose for which you went out, destiny guided you first in that direction; and before you had time to give your order, a cream ice was in your hands. And it was refreshing after the fierce heat outside.

Right at the end of the Pera street was an open space containing some half dozen Christian tomb-



stones, and where the arabas stood for hire by the Turkish ladies. Nothing can be conceived more characteristic than these vehicles; and I will attempt a description, though I feel I shall fail. Have the kindness to summon up a house on wheels, after the Louis XIV. fashion, and very gaily painted. This vanity is usually drawn by one horse, which, however, never gets out of a walking pace; and the Arabaji stalks proudly by its side, meditating on bucksheesh. In these conveyances, the Turkish ladies recline on soft cushions, and the doors are wide open, probably from the lack of handles. At times the effendis will indulge in a drive; but, in that case, always have the chibuk between their lips.

But much more pleasant in appearance are the waggons in which the women proceed to the sweet-waters of Europe and Asia. They consist of a long quadrangular frame, in which six persons find room: round it runs a small balustrade, about two feet high, usually painted bright red. From the four corners of the cart project poles, bearing a snow-white cover, as a protection from the sun, the edge being adorned with gold fringe and tassels. This cart, in which a fairy would not object to travel, is drawn by two grey or milk-

white oxen, and led by a gaily-dressed khavass. When one of these carts passes you, and you see half a dozen Odalisques squatting in it, you cannot refrain from stopping to look at them, and are not deterred by the muttered "Jawurs" and "Pezevenks" of the Turkish bystanders. To "rile" the latter, one of the Haidées is sure to let her veil fall; and you gain a hurried glance of languishing almond-shaped eyes and brickdust cheeks.

This square is always covered in the afternoon by Turkish women, apparently enjoying the open air; for there is nothing else to attract them. They sit in long rows, smoking and chattering away like a parcel of town-sparrows. It is fortunate for you, though, if you cannot understand them; for their conversation would not improve your morals. But what else can be expected from these poor victims of brutal sensuality.

I am happy to say that Pera is so far civilized, that it possesses one billiard table at the Grand Hotel de Bellevue. It would be better were the cloth to be renewed; but it is rather amusing to play on a table which stands at an angle of about  $45^{\circ}$ ; and where the great art consists in keeping the ball out of the bottom pockets. I need hardly

say that the table is not patronized by Turks; for their idea of amusement is always connected with a sitting position. But Pera possesses its fast young men, who dissipate, to a ferocious extent, in lemonade and cigarettes, and have even been known to bet as much as one shilling; though I never heard of a bet being paid.

It has been popularly stated—I think by the author of “Things not Generally Known”—that there is no village, however remote from civilisation, in which a German tailor may not be found. Such being the case, I need not say that the German element is strongly represented in Turkey, and the Teutons hold most of the trades. As an amusing instance of their unity, I may observe that they have two *Liedertafeln*, and sundry beer-gardens, where something resembling Bairisch Bock may be drunk; their concerts, however, are delightful, and formed my pleasantest amusement during my stay.

Strangely enough, I have forgotten the most important thing in Pera—the dogs. They are very Ishmaelites in the Frankish quarter: for every hand is raised against them; and would gladly emigrate to Stamboul, if they dared. But the dogs have their appointed quarters, and must

not cross the boundary, or they will fare badly. Hence, the Perote dogs endure their wrongs meekly, and generally remain out of the town till nightfall, when they come in and prowl about for food.

Now, I confess I am a lover of dogs; but I never could feel any affection for the Turkish breed; they are a cross between the wolf and a shepherd's dog; and, owing to their irregular habits, are nearly all mangy. In Pera, as I said, the dogs had a sad life of it; and there was a captain of a merchantman who regularly massacred half a dozen every night, for some reason best known to himself.

In the city of the Turks proper, it is a difficult task to teach a dog gratitude; for he expects his food as a right. In Pera, on the other hand, where these privileges have been abolished, the dogs soon notice who is kind to them, or throws them a lump of bread, and will follow their benefactor to the threshold of his door, which, however, they never pass. I had one dog, to which I was wont to throw a piece of bread. He was rather less ugly than his fellows; and so, whenever I went out, he always followed me to the end of his beat, but not

a step further ; had he done so, he would have been exposed to the fury of the other dogs. Whenever a dog invades the territory of his neighbours—usually after dark, and impelled by hunger—the other dogs that catch him in the act set up a fearful howl, which attracts all the animals of the quarter. They surround the culprit, and seem to form a jury, quite ready to find him guilty. One of the dogs enacts the judge, and at a given sign, they fall on the culprit, who is often killed on the spot. Thus, you see, the dogs of Constantinople behave, for all the world, like the Italian beggars. Altogether, though, they are treacherous brutes, and will attack your calves under the cover of night, though the sight of a stick makes them slink off in daylight.

There, I think I have given you the concentrated essence of my three weeks at Pera. I wish it had been more valuable for your sake ; but I really had not an adventure worth describing. Of course I was cheated in every transaction ; but, in a very short time, that becomes quite natural in a country where everybody is a rogue, from the Grand Vizier, downwards. I really hardly like to

except the Sultan himself ; and it may be, that the British capitalists, who took up his 6 per cent. reloan, may yet have a painful experience in this spect.

## CHAP. XXIV.

## A NIGHT WITH THE SULTAN.

**M**Y enforced stay in Stamboul had one consolation to offer me: there was plenty going on worth seeing, for it was the Bairam festival; and the whole population flocked into the streets to sow their gapeseed. Of course, I could not be behind the rest of the world: so one fine night we descended Top-Khanèh hill to visit the Mosque where the Sultan receives his new wife from the Mollah, on the Kourban-Baïram.

The Mosque, one of the handsomest on the European side, is situated close to the Gun Arsenal, at the end of a large square. The entrance is through iron gates which, when we reached, were held by Khavasses, armed with long white sticks. Most furiously they attacked the dense throng which could not give way, owing to the pressure in the rear. It was for all the world like the police at an execution, when the law is hung up for a sea-

son, and the baton rules despotically. I am quite convinced that they saw our gold lace; but that did not prevent me getting a very ugly blow on my arm, which I raised to guard my face. In an instant I had the fellow by the throat, and double-thonged him, shouting in his ear "Zabit Inglis, you hideous scoundrel!" Down on his knees he plumped, yelling Amaun, Bey-Zadéh — this appeal for mercy, and the flattery conveyed in being called "son of a Lord" stayed my hand. With a profusion of bows, the Khavasses threw open the great gates, and we marched in triumphantly.

It was a splendid sight. Close to the waterside, was an arch covered with hollow tin cups, which reflected the light in a most astounding manner. In all the fountains floated water-lilies made of paper, and containing lights, while trees were also covered with transparent fruit. The Mosque was illuminated from top to bottom, and rings of light were arranged round the graceful minarets, producing an exquisite effect. The troops, too, of whom there were some thousands drawn up, looked positively clean, and all wore white trowsers.

The Bosphorus also offered a magical sight: all the ships' sides were clothed with light, and the rigging covered with lamps. At the moment the



Sultan landed from his double-banked kaik, Bengal lights were lit up all around. I confess, that I never saw so magnificent a scene in all my life. The cypress-clad heights of Scutari stood out for a while as if beneath the light of day, and gradually faded away into the obscurity. Guns were banging in every direction; and it was a perfect realization of the Arabian nights.

I am happy to say, we had a famous sight of the mighty Padishah. At first I thought we should be foiled, for two French soldiers stood right before us, smoking their *brule-gueules*, and listening with the most stoical indifference to my remonstrances that they should make room for a lady. But I had my revenge: I saw, hurrying past, my friend Col. Waagman, Head of the Polytechnic School, and imparted my troubles to him. In a second he thrust the Frenchmen aside with a monitory "*Place pour une dame, Messieurs,*" and added to his kindness, by sending for two chairs from the guardhouse. And so we waited in comfort; the only annoyance being that an oil lamp would persist in dripping down upon my red collar. But we can't have every thing our own way in this world.

I almost wish now I had not seen the Sultan,

for I was robbed of one illusion more. I had depicted to myself the mighty ruler of the Mussulman hordes as a man of lordly presence, ready to defend his principles sabre in hand; but this poor decrepit Jew could not be the Mussulman Pope. He was wrapped from head to foot in a long black cloak, fastened with diamond clasps; and on his head was the fez, with a diamond crescent adorning it, from which rose an eagle's plume. His appearance fully bore out the German Countess' remark that he suffered from a plethora of wives.

He was gone. The fat Pashas followed at his heels; and I felt quite in a good humor again with our procession on opening Parliament. In a word, I missed the beef-eaters; for I could not realize a monarch without those appendages. But there was nothing to represent them or the cents gardes. Any one who felt the inclination could have an easy shot at the Padishah; but I suppose no one thought it worth the trouble. I don't think that M. Louis Napoleon would undergo the same publicity with equanimity.

Well! he was gone, and we spent an hour with great pleasure in surveying the sitters in the arabas. There was the whole of the Sultanic Harem assembled; at least I was told so—guarded

by the most repulsive of eunuchs. Fortunately, the crowd was so dense, that they had no chance of employing their crooked, ugly-looking khandjars, although I fancy, from their looks, they would have had no objection to rub out half a score of Infidels. I must give the ladies the credit of saying, they were not at all offended by our scrutiny; and some of them held out their hands kindly enough to my wife.

In other parts of the grounds, we came across wandering minstrels, singing very improper songs, accompanied by the most suggestive gestures. The Turks have the most extraordinary ideas as to street-amusements. They are thorough babies in that respect. If ever, by any accident, I possessed 500 pounds, I feel sure I could make my fortune, by taking a band of Æthiopian serenaders to Stamboul. The only difficulty I can see, is, that the Sultan might insist on buying up my darkies, and I am afraid he would pay me in *caimès* which are of no use to anybody, not even the owner. But, as I shall never have that sum at my command, I must lay aside the scheme, leaving it to be carried out by the Rothschildren of fortune. Another instance where genius is fettered by the want of sordid dross !

The hour is up, and the Sultan re-appears; looking if possible seedier than ever. His head hangs still more on his shoulder, like a hapless bird which has been prematurely aroused from its slumbers, and struggles in vain against the influence of sleep. Were he not a Mussulman, I should suspect that he had been looking a little too deep into the beakers of Falernian; but, of course, that is impossible. I wonder though, what they have been at in that Mosque; for some of the Pashas or "big men," find it difficult to keep their feet. Perhaps, though, their polished leather boots are too tight for them. Mem! All big men, in Turkey wear patent leather, and take to stomach, in proportion to their rise in position. A thin Pasha would be abnormal, and lead to suspicious notions that he was saving money; which, of course means robbing the Governmental till.

Once more the cannon belch forth their flames; the Commander of the Faithful has entered his kaïk, and is *en route* for Dolma-Bagtché. Let us wish him a good night's rest, for he certainly looks as if he wants it. I look around in vain, though, for that fairest of Circassian maids whom the priests have given him. Is it a myth? or has she been spirited into one of the Arabas? If so, I

wonder what reception the other beauties will give her? Son of a slave himself, the Padishah is a perfect slave to his wives; and dares not say his life is his own. He is not allowed a wife in the proper sense of the term; and if he betray any preference, it must be in secret, or the harem would soon grow too hot to hold him. His bed is not of roses, as young men might be inclined to fancy.

So soon as he is gone (and, mind you, from his first arrival there has not been an isolated cheer—he came and went and made no sign), the evening's entertainment commence in earnest. The most splendid fireworks are let off; hundreds of bombs explode in the air, creating a stupendous row; sheaves of rockets shoot up, surpassing anything ever seen in England, even the 500 rockets I saw, when a very small boy, fired from Hyde Park at the Queen's Coronation. My ears appear ready to burst from the concussion, and I hold my head down involuntarily.

After a while I fall a-thinking, and my thoughts assume a gloomy and cynical tinge. I regard the Sultan as a man obtaining money under false pretences; he comes into our market, pleading poverty, and borrows money, which he expends in

fireworks. Only that very morning, my Bimbashi and I had visited the Seri-asker, and complained bitterly that our men were left to starve. He pleaded poverty and, yet his master wastes, in one night, enough money to keep the battery for a twelvemonth. I wish I may be the Mr. Commissioner, before whom the insolvent Sultan must appear some day or another—wont I give him a lengthened remand, that's all!

Well, it is all over, thank heaven! My mouth is parched with powder-smoke; my ears are almost bleeding with over-excitement. Let us get home and have some supper. Oh, yes! its all very fine talking of getting home; look at that crowd which has invaded the streets while we were inside, and reveals no intention of budging, however much the mounted Khavasses may dash through them. There, we are through the gates with a rush, but we are no better off; the streets are occupied by arabas, and I would sooner cross Cheapside at the time of high change than attempt a passage. Fortunately, here is a lemonade-seller's truck; suppose we liquor? We do so, and within a quarter of an hour have exhausted his stock, so excessive is our thirst. The human tide flows past, seething and recoiling beneath the kour-

bashes of the Khavasses. Every one wants to be first, and in the tortuous streets, there is no chance of escaping. Better stop where we are, than get a knife stab, for which government will offer no pension.

And there we stand for two solid hours, trying to find a break in the sweltering crowd. Still, they are the most orderly mob I ever saw ; there is no unnecessary hustling, and all move on as if worked by machinery. There are but few women in the throng ; but even they seem awe-stricken, and do not give their tongues the legitimate airing. Everybody is smoking ; so that, perhaps, accounts for the silence, but to me the presence of such a solemn assembly offers something menacing ; they look like a band of conspirators, bent on mischief. But, bless them ! they mean no harm ; they are only chewing the cud. The Turks are not demonstrative ; during the whole of the fireworks, I listened for the o-o-o-o-h ! so common at Cremorne, when anything remarkable is fired, and listened in vain. The true Turk is apathetic, and regards everything, no matter how unwonted, as forming a fresh link in life's dull round.

At length, there is a cessation in the throng ; we light our lamps and breast Top-Khanèh hill.

Of course we lose our way. I never went out in Pera once without doing so ; but what's the odds? we are three strong men, well armed, and could show a bold front to a score of Perote scoundrels. As we moon along we find it advisable to put out two of the candles, and burn them in turn, for fear of being left in the dark, and every now and then stumble over a masterless dog, who slinks off out the way, swearing in canine language.

At length, matters get past a joke ; but, fortunately, we fall across a most intoxicated French gendarme. He recovers himself at once, however, at the sight of a lady, and stands at ease. He hurriedly explains, that we are within a stone's throw of the Piccolo Santo, and insists on showing us the road. Of course we accept his offer ; for we know that he makes it from pure chivalry, and not from desire of a shilling. He puts us in the right road, and leaves us with an infinity of bows, humming the "Seigneur de Framboisie." As he turns the corner we can distinguish the lines—

" Il trancha sa tête——te  
Au bout de sa parapluie;  
Il trancha sa tête——te——"

but the rest is lost.



From this moment, all is plain sailing ; we stop for a moment to survey the silvery play of the moon on the Bosphorus (I really beg your pardon ; but I know no other expletive to explain my meaning) ; and, then, hunger being omnipotent, we rush off to the hotel.

There ; did I not tell you so ! The porter receives us—looking like a deeply-injured individual, because we have kept him up so late. Of course, “the cook zall ’ave gone to him bed ;” but, never mind, old fellow ; we’ve got lots of grub in our room. I expected something of this sort before we started, so I made my preparations.

So, we collect all our candles, and assemble in the central hall, which leads to the first-floor bedrooms. The table is speedily covered ; the brandy bottle makes its jovial round ; and, by degrees, my guests increase to some twenty. Fortunately, they do not care for eating, so long as there is anything to drink. Presently, a French dealer in wines makes his appearance, aroused by the refrain of the “*Seigneur de Framboisie*,” which I persist in singing. He produces any quality of samples ; my wife retires to bed ; and **WE MAKE A NIGHT OF IT**. If the Sultan could hear from Dolma Bagtché, the enthusiastic way in which we drink his health, he would feel consoled.

The last thing I remember was the French Commis Voyageur holding forth in a tremendous way about that — something or other — Louis Napoleon ; and I fancy it high time to retire. I do so, and try to sleep ; but, for a time, it is all in vain. They go on *crescendo* ; but gradually I fall into a broken slumber, in which I see the Commis Voyageur crowned king of France, by the will of the Turkish Contingent.

However, he was a trump ; for his wine had not a headache in it.

## CHAP. XXV.

## THE SWEET WATERS.

I WISH Major Miller had been—well, further first, before he put it into my wife's head that she must visit the Sweet Waters of Europe. It was a decided attack upon my pocket, I assure you; but I wrestled with it, and was defeated—he would go to the Sweet Waters.

The sun burned above our heads, like a huge copper red-hot ball; my gold-lace bound my forehead with a circlet of fire; my eye-balls were almost starting out of my head, as we descended Top-Khanèh-hill toward the plying-place for the boats. In despair, I rushed into a shop, and bought two white cotton umbrellas, with brass ferules, exactly like the red articles one sees on a German marketing-place on any rainy day.

I had made up my mind to do things in style; nothing less than a double-banked kaik would serve my lordship. Fierce was the shock of oaths

as I bargained ; but I was defeated in the most humiliating manner. Two pounds ten, in piastres, was the lowest farthing the boatmen would take ; and I gave in. It was all very well for general officers to go raising the prices, by paying anything that was asked of them ; but for me, a humble sub, as good as out of the service, such a sum was a serious consideration. Hence, I had to pocket my dignity, and come down to a single boatman. With him I formed some sort of unsatisfactory agreement, and we started.

The *kaïk*, that favourite of the poetlings, is, in reality; the most uncomfortable aquatic vehicle out. I used to fancy, when at Oxford, the outrigger-wherry the *acmé* of danger ; but I was undeceived at Stamboul. Once in the *kaïk*, you are bound hand and foot: if you make the slightest energetic movement, the boat must turn a turtle ; and there is but poor chance of escape in the madly-coursing Bosphorus. But if you do your part, you run no danger; for the *kaidji* is the most careful of men. He really seems not to believe in fatalism, but steers with a care which is almost incredible, considering the pace at which the boats shoot along, and the number that are constantly coming across each other's track.

I did not enjoy my trip so much as I should have done, had the boatman allowed me to keep my umbrella up; but it caught the little wind there was, and doubled his work. So we patiently endured our grilling, and were almost too languid to enjoy the scenery. Yet it deserves careful observation; for it furnishes an excellent idea of Turkish life, to glide along beneath the old town wall, and watch the latticed windows of the harems. Further on, in a protected creek, the Turkish men-of-war lie up in ordinary — fine, stately vessels, but bearing the unmistakeable symbols of Mussulman neglect and sloth. From one or the other, the wailing sound of a brass band reaches your ear; and you wonder whether the Turks will ever learn another tune besides that excruciating “God save the Padishah!”

Suddenly, the Golden Horn closes up, and you enter what resembles the neck of a bottle. Your boat glides up a narrow channel, very like the Cherwell for angularity, and tolerably well-wooded for Turkey. Presently, you find the channel rendered almost impassable by boats, and, in sheer despair, you put into land. You have reached the Sweet Waters, but may look for them in vain. You notice a dingy chateau, a sluggish dirty

stream, a most dusty patch of grass, which seems suffering from a vegetable mange, and equally mangy-looking Turkish sentries. Now you learn how the Mussul-woman enjoys her liberty.

It is certainly a great day for them, this Friday, for they have assembled by thousands in arabas and kaïks. They crouch on the ground, smoking innocuous cigarettes. As we pass their serried ranks, a shrill titter runs along the line; and one, bolder than the rest, seizes my wife's gown, and inspects its quality with true womanly envy. But, only for a moment: a scowling eunuch stalks up, and the poor cowed creature tremblingly shrinks back from his uplifted rhinoceros whip. I feel inclined to bonnet the brute with my umbrella: but I wisely refrain; for he wears a tremendous yataghan, and I read something in his eyes which tells me he would have no objection to practise a little blood-letting upon me.

And positively that is all I have come four miles to see: rows upon rows of women, wrapped up in silk cloaks and *yashmaks*, sunning themselves. The only sign of life is when boys hurry past with brass vessels, and shout, "*Boz! boz!*" which signifies iced-water. I try a glass; but the water is lukewarm: it is another of those

dreary impositions which meet me at every corner in this accursed land.

More and more arabas arrive, and the dust grows absolutely stifling. Khavasses, armed to the teeth, gallop up and down, making room for some fat and very unctuous Pacha, who comes crawling along in a gilt coach, drawn by two wretched horses, and the wheels evidencing a sad paucity of grease. But nothing disturbs his awful serenity: he slowly descends, takes his seat beneath an umbrageous tamarisk-tree, and encamps for the afternoon.

Half-a-dozen servants, with jewelled *chibuks*, hurry up: a pipe is lighted by the *chibukji*, the little silver plate placed on the ground, and his Mightiness gravely drinks the smoke. Presently, you hear the cracking of a wood fire: his Magnificence will condescend to take his coffee. Exquisite filagree gold-cups are produced, the Mocha boiled, and the Pacha gives a luxurious grunt of satisfaction as he swallows the burning liquid.

Pass on; we must not stand too long betwixt the wind and his nobility, or we may disturb his admirable *keff*.

The only pleasing sign is where mothers are present with their children; for they have a fond-

ness for them which borders on the animal. My wife unwisely offers her hand to a plump little fellow with his smart fez ; but his mother draws him back with alarm, and spits repeatedly. She is striving to guard him against the *mal occhio* of the *kafir* woman, who displays her face so immodestly. At the same time, she draws her own veil more closely round her, and hisses something between her teeth, which I know instinctively to bear a reference to my father's grave.

I need not say, that the Armenian ladies are not absent from the scene ; for they would at any time go a day's journey to display their finery. Dressed within an inch of their lives, and carrying a weight of jewellery which must be most oppressive in this glowing weather, for they have not attained the luxury of Juvenal's prefect with his summer rings, they flash past us, leaving a pleasant fragrance of Latakiah behind them.

In the midst of the confusion, English officers stalk solemnly about, seeking whom they may devour, and fancying they are producing a decided impression on the fair sex. The ladies are not a bit behindhand in reciprocating ; but it is a very harmless flirtation on both sides, and confined to the eyes ; for there are too many Turks about,



and they have a right to interfere with any woman who seems at all inclined to go astray.

Further on, we notice a European lady seated in a smart carriage, and surrounded by a swarm of Frenchmen. 'Tis Mlle. Euphrosyne, *jeune première* of the Perote Opera, with her mama by her side to play propriety. You may fancy her goings on very doubtful, especially if you attend the May meetings at Exeter-hall; but I assure you that the mam'selle means no harm. She cannot help flirtation—that is the Frenchwoman's apparent mission in the world—but nothing more. "*Je ne suis pas begueule*," she will say, in her moments of confidence, "*mais*," and anyone acquainted with French women will appreciate the virtue of that "but." Euphrosyne moves through the world fêted and adored by the whole male sex. Attachés swarm round her like wasps round a sugar-cask: she is kind to them all, as is her nature; but will, in all probability, end her career by marrying a worthy *épiciér*, in the High-street, Pera, who wears a most pronounced white night-cap, and will take to stomach at the age of forty.

Here is another type, only too often visiting the Sweet Waters, I am sorry to say, after the evacuation of the Crimea—Miss Dashaway, who

has come out to see her brother, in another brother's yacht, and, in reality, through a tendency to fast life. She, too, is surrounded by a swarm of beaux; but mark the distinction between her and Euphrosyne. She is as much an actress as the other; but she plays her part with true British clumsiness. She wants to catch the Honourable Captain Fitz-Spavin—you can see that at a glance—and so does he. But she has not a shadow of a chance: Fitz has already selected an Armenian young lady of fabulous wealth for his bride, and devotes his leisure moments to Miss Dashaway, thus leading her into a fool's paradise.

But, even were he not engaged, how can Miss Dashaway hope to catch him? She is essentially vulgar; for she has assumed masculine manners, and forgotten those belonging to her sex. Unwittingly she affords considerable amusement to sundry young ensigns, who talk of her familiarly as "no end of a gal"; but I doubt whether even one of those beardless gentlemen will be seduced into matrimony. Lady Gay Spanker is an idealism more than a reality, I am proud to say, in defence of my fair countrywomen.

It is no concern of mine, if Miss Dashaway makes a fool of herself; but I have a right to

object against her putting herself up before the ignorant Turks as a specimen of English society. They go home, pondering over the scene they have witnessed, and harden their hearts the more against external influences. A mousquetaire hat may be very fascinating; but, judging from the conduct of the wearer, I do not think a Pasha will be disposed to introduce it into his harem.

And so pondering, I wend my way to the *kaik*. It is rather a difficult matter to find it among the throng; but I know it will be there, for I have not paid the boatman. Him I find, although forming the centre of a ring of *kaidjis*, and holding forth in a solemn and mysterious manner. I presume that we are the subject of his discourse; for, when I hail him, all eyes are fixed upon me with a certain degree of intelligence, as much as to say, "Talk of the so-and-so, and he is sure to come."

The return is far more pleasant; for the taboo is removed from the umbrellas, and we glide along at a tremendous pace. Presently, the *kaidji* commences crooning a wondrous song, evidently nearly related to that describing the siege of Belleisle. He is a marvellously handsome fellow,

dressed in the cleanest of shirts, open at the chest; and his muscles look like a bundle of ropes. But his song grows so melancholy, that I stop his mouth by handing him a cigarette.

We land, and I pay him. He was the only Turk I ever met in my life who did not ask for bucksheesh over and above his legal fare. We rush to the nearest stall, and indulge in a mild debauch of iced lemonade. The man gazes in wonder as the beneficent fluid disappears down our throats with a hiss. Then, we crawl slowly up the hill, in search of our hotel by a short cut, and naturally lose our way.

I do not object to the sun *per se*—indeed, I rather enjoy a hot day; but I protest against the admixture of unpleasant smells, which greet you in the streets of Galata. The Turks have a habit of throwing everything out into the road which they want to get rid of; and the aspect of the pavement is as if all the dustmen's carts were unloaded along Piccadilly. This would not be so bad, if you could procure a conveyance; but you must walk. There is no calling a Hansom; for there is no room for such a useful article; and having to wade ankle-deep through this pot-pourri is far from exhilarating.

Hence we were not sorry when the hotel was at length reached; and the dinner-bell sounded most opportunely to restore our wearied frames.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

## A DAY IN STAMBOUL.

THE connecting link between Stamboul proper, or Constantinjeh, as it is officially called, and the Frank quarter, is formed by the New Bridge — probably the longest in the world, though I cannot say much in favour of its architectural beauty. People are supposed to pay for crossing it, but I fancy only the *rayahs* are called upon. Just at the entrance of the bridge stand money-changers, with bags of copper money; for the Turkish currency is always in a flaccid condition. The principal copper coinage, in my time, consisted of Austrian two-kreuzer pieces; but when I accidentally offered some in payment at Pesth, they were declined, as having been called in. Most monetary transactions are effected in very greasy and ragged *beshtiks*, or five-piastre notes; the sight of which would do a professional forger's eyes good, so easy of imitation are they.

The bridge is always crowded, for the ugly little steamers bound for Therapia, Biyukdereh, etc., start from the centre. Here you get a good notion of the Turks. Though the boats are always thronged, it has occurred to no one to make a practical gangway; men, women, and children, are forced to climb over or under the balustrade of the bridge, and, at the risk of their necks, do some tight-rope dancing along a most doubtful-looking plank. The captains of the steam-boats, too, have a happy knack of stopping their vessels by driving them full bolt against the bridge; and I expect, some day, to hear that it has broken from its moorings, and gone on a cruize in the Sea of Marmora.

Passing the "Vapor" station, we enter the City of the Turks, the Faubourg St. Germain of Mohammedism. But you have a heavy ordeal to undergo in the swarms of Dragomans who way-lay you, and insist on being your guide. If you are foolish enough to select one, you are doomed to plunder the whole day through; for the bazaar merchants charge you one-third more, which wanders into these scoundrels' pockets. It is, therefore, better to follow my example, and lay about you right and left with a hunting-whip. That is the true Eastern *faugh-a-ballah*.

But when you have passed this hungry band of ruffians, and have climbed the steps leading past Achmet's Mosque, you feel consoled. Stamboul is truly a city of the dead ; the streets by day are quite deserted ; and even the dogs, as they lie sunning themselves, are too lazy to get out of your way. But as you have only one object in climbing the hill, and that is to visit the bazaar, we will hasten there as fast as we can under the torrid sun.

What a relief it is to enter these long gloomy passages, which resemble cellars : but, see, there is iced lemonade : we must pay our respects at that shrine, before we go further. Ah ! that is really iced ; there is some honesty in Turkey after all. Now for a lump of sweetmeat, and we shall be able to go on.

I am sorry to say, though, this was the only sign of honesty I found throughout the bazaar ; for it was the traders' *mot d'ordre* to cheat the Britishers. "Signor Captain !" such was the cry that saluted me at every corner ; but I could not at all come to terms with the merchants. They asked the most fabulous prices, and the goods they offered were English or French.

A gigantic swindle was perpetrated throughout



the whole war. Clever European speculators deluged the Stamboul market with damaged silks, which were sold at exorbitant profit to the easy-minded English officers as products of the Broussa looms. I was asked four pounds ten for a lady's *bournous*; and, on returning to civilization, saw precisely the same article ticketed at twenty-five shillings, and christened "*Eugénie*," or some other flash name. It was the same with everything: a decently long cherry or jasmine pipe-stick commanded eight to ten pounds, amber mouth-pieces equally fabulous prices, and obtained them. More money than wit was the rule in those happy days for the Turks.

Even the seed-pearl-covered slippers, which ought, at any rate, to have been genuine, were base impostures, concocted at Nüremberg. I bought half-a-dozen stone rings, and they were *doublé*—but I shan't tell you to what extent I made a fool of myself. Any one going to Stamboul, I would advise to lay in a stock of English and French goods suited to that market, and, on returning home, give them away as coming direct. By that process much money will be saved, and a better article obtained.

There is one portion of the Bazaar, called the

Sultanyéh, which looks exactly like a slice of the Burlington Arcade cut off, and dropped in Turkey. This is the great resort of the Turkish ladies, who throng to it all day long, and lay out very tidy amounts. I suppose by this time they have been affected by the Crinoline Mania. One thing though, I noticed ; there appears to be very little known, touching the credit system ; when a lady bought a new dress, a nigger produced a gaily embroidered purse, and the lovely Dame went through an abstruse course of arithmetic ; generally erring, I regret to say, to her own advantage, when a precious combat of words ensued. But the merchant had been prepared for this, by cutting off a yard or so too little ; and so, after about four hours' bargaining, the lady would receive her parcel, and waddle off in her yellow boots to another shop.

The Merchants have to be very cautious in their dealing with the ladies ; not only are the latter afflicted with a decided klepto-mania, and pocket any inconsiderable trifles they can take, but they have a knack of bringing matters to a wrangle, after the article they have purchased has been cut from the piece. Now, it is a rule in Turkey, that no one will buy anything which has

been once cut from the piece; and the ladies, aware this, hope to obtain an abatement in the price. But this trick cannot be done twice, for the merchant usually insists on having cash down, before the fatal shears are applied.

The only part of the Bazaar which deserves serious study is the Arms-Bezestein; and if you mind what you are about, you may pick up a valuable Damascus blade or so. It is very pleasant to have to do with a Turk; for his rule is *prix fixe*, and he will not abate one farthing, for he does not understand the theory of small profits and quick return. But, while you are bargaining, he is too much the gentleman to keep you fasting: the first thing he does is to send to the nearest Cahvedjé's, for coffee and pipes; and you sit cross-legged for a couple of hours, trying who will beat the other in obstinacy. I was thus, a fortnight chaffering for a sword-blade, and did not get it after all; though I fancy the sum Mustapha Effendi expended in refreshments, would have covered the amount in dispute between us.

Another thing I admire in the Turks, is, that they appear to have no trade rivalry. In the Bazaar, you have a street of slipper-makers, then another of pipe-sellers, or fez-makers, and so on.

They never try to get away each others' customers, but listen placidly, as you bargain with their neighbour, and come away *re infectâ*. Though they are fully aware of the price you intend to give, their *esprit de corps* forbids their acceptance, and you must consent to be swindled. I wonder, though, whether they are all members of an Anonymous Society, and divide the profits every night. But I do not think Turkish acumen has attained that pitch yet.

Stamboul is the only part of the huge city, where there is any degree of jollity. Every one is so civil, and the Turks over the water are such gentlemen, that you learn to like them against your will. Were I ever to return, and which may the saints forbid! I should certainly eschew Pera, and take up my abode in this portion of the City. Idleness is praiseworthy there; and I confess, I dearly love lying on a sofa, and going to sleep over the last successful novel.

Of course, feminine curiosity conducted us to the Aja Sophia, and we managed a furtive peep at the interior of that celebrated Mosque. But the game was hardly worth the candle: there was nothing to be seen, save a building having a strong likeness to St. Pauls', minus the painted roof and

curious statuary, which converts a Christian shrine into a Temple of Bellona ; but we saw sundry large Ostrich Eggs, suspended from the ceiling by red cords. Another disillusion ! but we were growing used to them, in this land of humbug. With a mighty clatter of sticks, two Khavasses rushed forward to resent the intrusion, and rudely tore the leather curtain that covered the doorway from my hand. The show was over ; but when I think upon it quietly, I fancy that the rudeness was on my side. We had no right to offend Turkish belief in such an open way—unfortunately, that was the rule and not the exception.

I will not drag my reader about at my heels, as we “do” the stock sights of Stamboul, for they can be found in every book yet written about the East. But I can refer them to a work, which will give them every explanation : Colonel White’s “Three Years in Constantinople,” which, I am afraid, is not so well known as it deserves to be. If ever you see it on a bookstall, purchase it ; for it gives the most life-like account of Constantinople, I have yet come across. A book written about the Turks, if twenty years ago, is equally true to-day ; for it is their mission to stand upon the ancient ways. They never alter ; though they

may assume an external lacquer ; as for instance ; when they employ visiting cards, such as " M. et Mme. Reschid,"—scratch your Effendi, and you will find the Turk. Madame Reschid, if she be not belied, drove a very profitable trade, by educating young slaves, whom she supplied for a handsome consideration, to the " big men"—and so it goes on from highest to lowest.

And, as this is the last chapter I purpose devoting to the Turks, I may as well sum up at once what I have to say about the sick man. As a Doctor, I should advise, let nature work her own cure—your new-fangled receipts will not benefit him—if he possess a strong constitution that will pull him through—if not, he will gradually die away. I think the latter is the more likely alternative, but even then, that would be no great loss, for he is an insult to civilised Europe. He is an animal, belonging to the East, and has no business in our happy family ; he came among us by an impudent assertion of strength ; and held his ground by force of arms. With every attempt to fit himself for the society in which he wished to move, he has grown more and more effete ; he has assumed an external coat of cultivation ; which, however, poorly covers the festering mass beneath.

The only chance of salvation for Turkey, is by keeping up the old Mussulman element; and that is represented by some 700,000 persons. If you try to patch them up, you must fail, O mighty politicians, for all they ask, is to be let alone—but if you attempt to obtain concessions for the unprotected classes, you will assuredly entail a civil war. The result will be, that the Turks will go to the wall, and we shall have a Byzantine empire once again—of that sort of which D'Israeli once declared Lord Palmerston to be a *civis Græculus*.

If our worthy diplomatists could only settle who is to be the future master of Turkey, I would say, "Bucks, have at ye all!" But as I have a most uncomfortable, yet profound, belief that Russia will clutch the golden prize eventually, I think our best plan is to let the Turks alone, and not begin to cobble up a bastard constitution, or introduce a spurious civilization, which suits the Turk as badly as the military tunic in which he now swaggers through the streets.

But a truce to politics! Good-bye, Bono Johnny! You and I have spent many a happy day together, after all. I doubt whether we shall meet again; though I am sure not in a military capacity; and to your faults I feel a little kind.

You may be an assassin at heart, and I believe that you are ; but you spared my throat, and I give you my vote and interest. But, for heaven's sake, clean your streets, or you may be having a *Times'* correspondent complaining of your dirty ways ; and then your fate will be sealed without verdict of jury.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

## UP THE DANUBE.

**A**T last the worthy paymaster thinks proper to relieve me from my suspense. I sign some half a volume of papers, by which I give up all future claim on a paternal government, and I am a free man. I received £20 in lieu of passage, and can return home, or go to the deuce, in any way most satisfactory to myself.

There is a story afloat, that the Messageries Impériales propose conveying British officers home at half prices. I, therefore, trudge off to Scutari, obtain from General Storks a printed form testifying to my identity; and, armed with this, proceed to the office. The politest of clerks and of Frenchmen receives me; he is delighted to have the felicity of my acquaintance, and is most eager to fulfil my demand. He takes up his book, turns over many pages, and with an "*enfin*," asks, may he have the knowledge of my honored name — that

day four months' precisely there would be a vacancy. I stare at him in amazement; he is truly desolated; but such is the painful fact. If Monsieur — but I bounce out of the office, unheeding his apologies; for, I have a notion that the offered concession is one more French swindle.

For a week I prowl about Galata, way-laying transport skippers; but they are all booked for the regulars. I then try private enterprize, and spend a small fortune in Kaïks; barking my shins as I climb up the side of sundry dirty merchantmen; but I can come to no satisfactory conclusion. In the first place, I am asked £65 for ordinary decency, and the extras appeared suspicious. So I finally give up all thoughts of a sea-voyage, and decide on returning over land. I discover the office of the Austrian Lloyds', book myself for two places to Pesth, and I see light.

The next thing to be done was to procure a passport and the necessary *visas*. I confess that I dislike a foreign office passport, for it makes you look so small. Ten lines of steel engraved pronomena and titles, with the lame and impotent conclusion, "Mr. So and So (British subject)." Why, too, do they always use sand to dry the ink in foreign embassies, when blotting-paper is so cheap?

The Austrians, I notice, employ golden sand, which gives a peculiarly lustrous appearance to the envoy. But for all that, he affably condescends to pocket my five shillings, and, as I have had the honor of calling at the office three days in succession, I suppose I may consider it cheap at the price.

Another thing necessary, is to get rid of about a quarter of a ton of luggage; and, for that purpose, I consult a Perote auctioneer, who recommends an out-of-door sale. The next Sunday morning I proceed with my traps to a café, and the sale commences. Bed, blankets, high-boots, canteen, patent lamps, and all the impedimenta of campaigning life, are heaped up before the much amused Turks. The only thing that produced a fair price, was a small leather bag which a lady of sour aspect and mature age had set her will upon. All the rest go for the sum of seven pounds six. The money is handed over; and I gaze upon it in comic despair — I can make nothing of it. All I see is, that there is not a respectable silver piece among it; and that it would require a light porter to convey it to the hotel. The auctioneer comes to my assistance; he makes a very careful calculation on a piece of paper, and hands me six pounds five. I

am conscious that I have been swindled once again; but what to do? It was a choice of evil; in getting rid of the confounded money, I might have fared worse; so I thank the auctioneer, and drown my sorrow in coffee.

Now, the *mauvais quart d'heure* has arrived; I must settle with my landlord. For this purpose, I proceed to his sanctum, and find the worthy M. Destuniano shovelling up sovereigns from the ground into a potato sack. His limited arithmetic cannot comprehend so vast an amount. Still, he knows how to make out a bill; as I learn to my grief in the course of a quarter of an hour.

For a while I try to decypher the hieroglyphics, which would puzzle Grotefend himself. Here is a curious item "*22 jours de logement et nourriture à raisons de* (so and so many) *§ par jour.*" The next word boldly displayed "*Extuat*" I know is meant for extras; but how can I presume that "*2 do d'al*" represent two bottles of bitter? 2 "*longe*" I assume to mean luncheon; and I also make the curious discovery, that "*a bottle limonade en logemon*" costs 2s. 6d.; in the public room 1s. 6d. I allow that the weather is hot, and servants are weary; but had I known that a walk up stairs was paid for "*à raisons*" of one shilling a time, I would have

turned waiter myself. "*Un Coniack*" speaks marvels for my sobriety, though I find a suspicious quantity of champagne. But the total—30 odd pounds, as I am a sinner! That is rather a heavy per centage on my pay, and amounts within a trifle to the gratuity I receive from a grateful government. Surely, I have read somewhere of people who breathe the word of promise to the ear and break it to the hope? However, my sovereigns go to increase the plethora of mine host's potato sack.

I button up my pockets, fearful that I shall be robbed of my last shilling, and trudge down Top-Khanéh Hill for the last time, thank heavens! with an army of Hammals. The Bosphorus is very rough and no kaïk can put out; so I charter an old jolly-boat, for which the oarsman demands £2 10s., and I must pay it, as the "Bratwurst" steamer is bound to sail in half an hour.

About two hours after the appointed time, we set out for the Bosphorus. There is a most peculiar arrangement with the Lloyd's—up to Galatz, your food is extra—from that town to Pesth, you are charged nothing. It is satisfactory in one way; for on this day only the Captain, myself, and one more sat down to dinner. The *maladie de mer*

fiend had seized on all the rest. So soon as we entered the Black Sea, the full fury of the storm met us; and, after a vain contest, the captain was forced to put back and run into Therapia Bay, where we passed the night.

A curious sight was the deck of the "Bratwurst;" one half of the quarter-deck was railed off for the Turks, who pigged there in company, and looked as yellow as guineas. Their favourite specific against sea-sickness, is, apparently, onions; for everybody holds one in his or her hand, and gazes piteously upon it.

The next morning at six we set out again, and are again driven back to Beikos. Matters are now growing serious; we shall, in all probability, miss the corresponding boat, at Galatz, and that entails ten days' stay in the dearest and dirtiest town of the known world. We urge the captain to proceed, and taunt him about the sea-faring qualities of his boat. He fires up, and says that he is not afraid; but the company allowance his coals, and there may be a chance of them being expended ere we reach Varna; and where should we be then. We bless the company, and shut up.

The captain was one of the funniest fellows for a Dalmatian I ever met. He had visited England

more than once, and picked up some few words of English. He convulsed my wife, as she lay on a mattress sorely discomfited, by telling his love passages with a Miss Sarah Clarke, who, as far as I could make out, had left him for another. Still, she must have run in his head; for whenever he looked at his watch, and found how much he was behind time, he would sigh profoundly, "Oh, my patience, Miss Sarah Clarke!"

At length, Varna was reached, and we telegraphed to Galatz that there was an English general on board, who intended going up the Danube, and the corresponding boat must be detained. This was quite true, for we had Sir Hugh Rose with us; but he was only bound for Bucharest. The next morning brought us to the Sulina mouth, and displayed to us a frightful scene, some seventy masts projected from the water, showing where the wrecks lay. Of course, every one on board was lost; but that is considered an every-day occurrence in Turkey. Threading our way through these *mementos mori*, we stopped at the *Douane*; and were at once invaded by the Austrians. They occupied the Principalities at that period as a precautionary measure, and were practically masters of the

country. From what I saw of them, they did their spiriting gently ; but they had no right to be there.

Once escaped from the Danubian Delta, our course was pleasant enough, though there was hardly anything to be seen along the banks, save flat tawny plains. Every now and then, we noticed a guard-house, built on posts, projecting some thirty feet from the ground ; for the Danube is a treacherous neighbour, and enters your sleeping-room when least expected, if he grow tired of his own bed. As we passed, the guard regularly turned out to salute the Austrian flag. It usually consisted of a corporal and four men, the former armed with a musket, the latter presenting broomsticks and cudgels. They are supposed to keep the plague out ; but are more likely to suffer from it, themselves, owing to the swamps in which they live.

I need not delay with the historic points of the Danube ; for they have been so often done. I may only remark, that the further you get from Stamboul, the dirtier the towns become ; and the soldiers are even more neglected than at home. The most characteristic sight I witnessed, was an encampment of Egyptian troops, with their white



tents on a grassy slope, the men all engaged in bathing and washing their shirts.

But the Lower Danube is a melancholy sight to any one of a reflective mind; on both sides the river are magnificent lowlands, set in by forest-clad hills; and nothing is done to derive any benefit from them. Emigration is the only way in which Bulgaria can be rendered what it should be—the granary of Europe; but who will venture to settle in a land, where law and justice are ridiculed, and the prosperous man can be ruined, without redress, by hungry craving pachas; who must pay the bankers of Stamboul the enormous sums they took up, as a price for their rich Pashaliks?

But even those portions of land which are treated fairly, obtain no outlet for their productions; as Bulgaria is perfectly innocent of roads in the European sense. The peasants still use ox-drawn solid-wheeled carts, exactly like those to be seen in Hindostan; and more than half the freight is jolted off in going down to Braila, the entrepôt of the corn trade. Of course, the Turkish government do nothing to remedy this, however lavish they may be in promises, when they require a new loan; but they merely regard revenue as sup-

plied to satisfy the Padishah's luxuries, and fill their own pockets. How long, how long! the traveller must ask himself, when he sees these ghastly evidences of effeteness and incapacity.

The solution of the question, that the Principalities should be handed over to Austria, in exchange for the Venetian kingdom, I hold to be impracticable; for Hungary is, to all practical purposes, as far behind the agricultural age, as Bulgaria. Repeated attempts at colonisation have been made by the Austrian government; but they have failed, because the German peasants put no faith in their promises; although the most favourable conditions are offered.

The only chance of the Principalities being ameliorated is Russian occupation; and to that it must come, sooner or later. Recent events have proved the astounding resources of the Russians; and fifty years will find them one of the first nations in Europe. The Panslavistic propaganda are ardently working for their cause; and Austria is unconsciously playing into their hands.

Fortunately for my readers, our steamer has, at last, arrived at Galatz, and puts an end to these prosy reflections.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## CIVILIZATION.

NOTHING more strikingly proved our return to civilization than the contrast between the new vessel we entered and the one we left. In the latter, we had been regaled with caviare and mastic, our dessert consisting of a slice of cake and a glass of pitchy Cyprus. Here we had two splendid meals daily, in addition to coffee; and there was no stint. My wife picked up rapidly. On board the "Bratwurst" she had almost lived on almonds; and, despite the good captain's Italian proverb about ten almonds being equal to one egg, they did not seem to support nature.

The saloon was magnificently furnished with plate glass and pictures, the waiters were perfect in their attention, and everybody anxious to please. I regret, though, that I have no more to say in favour of the vessel. The sleeping arrangements are atrocious: there is one huge cabin for the

ladies, and another just opposite for the men ; and they are perfect menageries. I am sorry to say, from my wife's report, that the Moldavian Princesses were not models of their lovely sex : they lay in bed, smoking cigarettes and drinking small glasses of rum, till the breakfast-bell sounded ; then, they arrayed themselves in magnificent velvets and jewellery—and returned to bed when the meal was over. A general objection to water and fresh air was perceptible among them ; and, altogether, there are pleasanter places than the hold of a slaver, the Black Hole of Calcutta, or the ladies' cabin of an Austrian Lloyd's.

On our side, the only thing to be complained of was the scanty supply of water for lavatory purposes, and the predilection drunken gentlemen had for tumbling in atop of you as you lay stifling in your berth. There were not half enough berths for the passengers ; and they lay all about the floors, or converted the grand saloon into a sleeping apartment ; sleeping, I believe, beneath the tablecloths, to give affairs a domestic aspect.

Why is this bad system kept up ? Simply, because the Company have a number of private cabins on deck, for which they obtain double prices. It is an imposition which all English

families must endure unrepiningly ; and so, I suppose, there is no chance of shaming the Company out of this bad practice. The Moldavian ladies, I believe, rather like the present free and easy system ; for they are not particular how they live, so long as they have plenty of fine clothes to make a sensation. But I fancy the same thing may be said of nations more advanced in civilization.

But you are apt to forget all these annoyances in the scenery that astounds you after passing Orsova and bidding a mental adieu to the last of the Turks, who gazes down on you listlessly from Fort Elizabeth. His red fez glistens for a moment in the sunshine, and the last link that binds you to Turkey is severed.

For an hour or two, you almost wish yourself back in Turkey, such annoyance does the Austrian Douane cause you with its scrutiny. You are proud and happy—you open your arms to greet civilization once more—and you find yourself embracing a white-coated gendarme, the type of obstructiveness and crab-like progress. Your trunks are examined politely, but ruthlessly ; and woe betide the unhappy man who tries to smuggle any tobacco !

I had a very amusing scene here with the Douane. Four of us had purchased a large bag of Latakiah as sustenance by the way. We had filled every pocket and pouch with the fragrant weed; but some four pounds still remained over, which could not be disposed of. So I left the bag lying about on the deck, and bided events. Before long, I heard a tremendous commotion. The tobacco was found; insulted dignity must be assuaged.

I am instantly pointed out as the culprit, and confronted by a most frowning gentleman, whose every moustache hair bristles with importance.

"Is this your tobacco?"

"Yes!"

"Will you pay the duty?"

"No. I'll make you a present of it."

"Must not be."

"Throw it overboard, then," I say, turning on my heel.

"You must do so; I dare not touch it."

I lift the bag, and am about to hurl it overboard, when a thought strikes me.

"May I have no tobacco duty free?"

"Two ounces are allowed to every passenger—"

"Good! Is that two ounces?" I ask, taking up a handful.

"Yes," he growls ; for he fancies I am selling him, as I am.

I turn to a crowd of grinning Hungarians, who enjoy the downfall of the Douanier.

"Will you accept two ounces of Latakiah—and you—and you?"

Fifty eager hands are held out ; every particle of tobacco is disposed of. The official retires beneath a burst of Homeric laughter, and two hours later I am once more possessed of my Latakiah.

How gladly would they have found an error in my passport ; but it was not to be. It receives six stamps, four written testimonials ; and I am free as far as Pesth, where it will have to be *visé* anew. By the time I reach London, there is not room for any more signatures on the broad-sheet.

The scenery round Orsova is marvellously fine. For about four hours you steam through a succession of lovely bits ; and then, all is over. The barren putztas of Hungary greet you, and you can go to bed as far as scenery is concerned.

The passengers amused themselves by mocking the millers, who came to the windows of their floating prison to gaze on the passing steamer. The way in which they responded I dare not describe ;

but I may say that this entertainment can only be had before the ladies appear on deck. I was told that the custom is as old as the mills; but surely some of the white-coats might be usefully employed in suppressing it.

My attention was engrossed in watching the motley groups that came on board our steamer at every station where we stopped. The Danube is the great highway of the Austrians; and hence it is no wonder that the boats are of such enormous size. Every type of humanity seemed collected on board — Hungarians, Wallachians, Jews, Chasseurs, Gypsies, dingy Moldavian officers, with tarnished silver lace, smart-looking soldiers, with their tight-fitting trowsers and ankle boots — all forming distinct groups, and talking in a suppressed tone, and looking round to see whether any Spitzel might be listening; for the spy system lies like a brooding cloud over the whole of Austria.

The Gypsies are very peculiar fellows, with their long rat-tailed hair, flashing eyes, and gleaming knives in their girdles. They go about selling mouse-traps, and other articles of domestic use, but principally to pilfer. They are utter Pariahs, and, like Ishmael, every man's hand is raised against them. They make good soldiers; but their vagabond habits cannot be easily eradicated.



The most interesting passengers to me were the Russians, who, on the signature of peace, flocked into Europe by thousands. I had great pleasure in recognizing Captain Martinitz and his wife, bound for a two years' tour, which they had honestly earned. Another gentleman I met had been Staff-Captain to Admiral Natchimoff in Sebastopol, and who told me many interesting things about the war, on which I will not dwell here.

At length, Pesth was reached, and we were glad to enter the magnificent Hotel d'Angleterre. It was so delightful to put up at a house, where there was no occasion for fierce bargaining, and to know that you would not be over-charged. One curiosity I may note: all the bed-rooms were newly papered, and on the walls hung a large framed sand-paper, with a request, in six languages, that you would be kind enough to strike your lucifers on this, instead of on the wall. Human nature could not resist such a temptation to mischief—I did not see one frame that appeared used.

Here I may end my narrative; for henceforth I have no novelty to offer. I may mention, that the Austrian dominions are the only part of Europe I am acquainted with, in which you are

forced into the first class, because there is no third, and where half-sovereigns are sagely decided to be worth 5s. 7½d. Nor would I advise you to travel with a large amount of luggage; for it will cost you as much as an extra passenger.

I may mention incidentally, that, by the time we reached Leipzig, I was utterly hard up, and had serious thoughts of being passed to my parish; when an official, awed by my gold lace, kindly advanced me sufficient money on my word to frank me to Baden-Baden. More than that, he stood a supper, like a Christian, which I repaid by much Latakiah. This was the only occasion on which I derived any benefit from the embroidery.

My soldiering is over: I hang up my useless sabre on the wall, and sum up the profit and loss. There is no doubt I have been a considerable patriot; for I am some hundreds of pounds out of pocket, and have to begin the world anew. A paternal Government pays no attention to my appeals; and, as there is no prospect of men being wanted for the present, I and my appeals are consigned to the waste-paper basket.

Still, I think that my wanderings have not been quite thrown away; and I have been enabled

to recover some of my money by writing the narrative of my travels. I have, too, something most valuable — a well-established grievance — which, in cleverer hands than mine, would lay the foundation of future fortune. A *sæva indignatio* suffuses my manly brow whenever I hear the name of Lord Panmure, and I chuckle with malignant delight when I read that he is again laid up with a gouty toe.

But, after all, I am wrong — if not my Lord Panmure, then Sir J. Peel or Sidney Herbert. 'Tis the system I should complain of, and not the instrument. I see daily more clearly, that no government can prosper which is not individually unjust: private considerations must be thrown aside on behalf of the *salus publica*. I have no cause of complaint, after all, for I have something to fall back upon; but I could name at this moment some twenty officers, once belonging to the Contingent, who are now comparatively starving in the streets of London.

The worst business of all was the way in which we were defrauded of the Crimean medal. The authorities relied upon a general order, issued after the fall of Sebastopol, that no person should have a medal, *unless engaged* in presence of

the enemy. Now, I should like to know, whether the Contingent did not meet this condition amply? At one time, the Sultan was inclined to give us all the "*Medjidié*"; but I suppose he could not raise the funds — so we were again disappointed.

On seeing the multitude of Crimean medals, and finding my own dress-coat undistinguished, I console myself with the thought of Castlereagh at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, where his was the only coat unadorned in the company. But what did Metternich respond to the remark? "*Parfois, il est bien distingué.*" The parallel may be imperfect, but it is the only satisfaction I have. For the sake of my sacrifices, reader, do not be angry with me for daring to institute such a parallel. *Vivite, valet!*

THE END.

LONDON:  
PRINTED BY J. WERTHEIMER AND CO.  
CIRCUS-PLACE, FINSBURY-CIRCUS.













